MAY 26 1965

The North American Review

The Compleat Volunteer

A Low Comedian

The Nazi Party: 20 Years After

Notebook from Ischia

A Disturbance

The Pot of Gold

Fiction, Poetry, Departments, and Reviews

Volume 250 Number 2 *MAY, 1965* *$1.00*

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The North American Review

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Contributors

ROBERT ALEXANDER writes, "I left Ohio long ago and have been living on both coasts, and for two years in France. Somewhat at the end of my rope—and also because it can be done honorably—I have just returned to Berkeley and opened a restaurant, The Quest."

MARGARET CARLSON won a Hopwood Award while a student at Michigan University and an Academy of American Poets Prize while a student at the State University of Iowa.

JERRY FITE is a staff writer for the Peace Corps in Washington, D.C.

Managing Editor of *Negro Digest,* HOYT W. FULLER's work has appeared in *The New Yorker* and *Midstream.* His rebuttal of John Ciardi's essay on James Baldwin appeared in our fourth issue.

Stories by J. CAROL GOODMAN have appeared in *Mademoiselle* and Martha Foley's *Best American Short Stories.* She lives in New Jersey with her husband and four daughters.

Globe-hopping is a natural thing in the life of MARY MARGARET LAWRENCE. Married to a government engineer, she has lived in India, Lebanon, and Ceylon. Fascinated by the journals of colonial Englishwomen, she hopes someday to write about "the problems of a housewife during the Mutiny of 1857."

DENISE LEVERTOV's most recent volume is *O Taste and See* (New Directions). She is completing periods of poetry-editing for Wesleyan University Press and *The Nation.* Anthologies in which her poetry can be found include *New Poets of England and America* (World Publishing Co.), *The New American Poetry 1945-1960* (Grove Press), and *Contemporary American Poetry* (Penguin Books).

E. N. PETERSON is a chairman of the Division of Social Sciences, Wisconsin State University at River Falls.

DAVID RAY's first book of poetry is *X-Rays* (Cornell University Press). His work has been anthologized in *New Poets of England and America* (World Publishing Co.). He teaches at Reed College.

DAVID O. RANKIN believes.

ANARCHIST'S DICTIONARY

Barber —
An expensive surgeon

CIA —
An ugly rumor

Critic —
One who loves the most

Death —
The last laugh of the pessimist

Excrement —
All men's equal in the end

Fluoridation —
A dirty Communist plot to improve our children's teeth

High School Football —
The show preceding the riot

Khrushchev —
A dead mortician

Lecherous —
Any objection to this dictionary

Pentagon —
National center for the defense of the numbers game

PhD —
Evidence of missed experience

Presbyterian —
Sees God in the morning in the bathroom mirror

Progress —
The road from creation to extinction

DAVID O. RANKIN

RUTH RICHARDS reports that she has "one husband . . . and three daughters. She recently sold to *Jack and Jill* a children's story, "The Dog Who Ate Everything."

VERN RUTSALA teaches at Lewis & Clark College in Portland. His first book of poetry is *The Window* (Wesleyan University Press). A poem by him appeared in our Winter '64 issue.

CHARLES WRIGHT will be returning from Italy in September. This is his first prose appearance in NAR; his poems have appeared in our first and fifth issues.

The tastemakers in this issue are: Robert Phillips, A. Farrell Borenstein, Mary Byerly, Walter Borenstein, Paul R. Carlsten, Armarius, William A. Stoppel, Bernard E. Richardson, David Meyer, and David Johnson For the Record.

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WHO'S ON YOUR SIDE?

If Americans these days are showing some reluctance to speak out on certain issues it is not without reason. Several thousand Americans found themselves painted red when tney signed the Stockholm Peace Petition for the World Peace Congress held at Stockholm, Sweden, in March of 1950. In this case the Congress was certainly controlled by Communists and the petition placed nearly the entire blame for the nuclear arms race upon the United States. It is doubtful if the majority of the American signers were Communist or even pro-Communist. Nevertheless it must be admitted that they had aided a Communist propaganda campaign.

But one does not have to be even this closely associated with Communists in order to be proclaimed guilty by reason of association. The National Council of Churches has long been termed leftist and pro-Communist by such groups as the John Birch Society, the Circuit Riders, and the Christian Crusade. Much of the evidence for this claim is of the type to be found in the "Compilation of Public Records of 658 Clergymen and Laymen connected with the National Council of Churches." This volume, published in 1962, was written by Myers G. Lowman, leader of the Circuit Riders. Although a few of those listed have several citations, over half have only one or two. One of these is Earl F. Adams, a member of the council from 1950 until his death in 1956. According to Lowman the evidence for Adams' pro-Communist leanings consists of the fact that, in 1938, he signed a call to the "New York State Model Legislature for Youth." This model legislature was sponsored by the American Youth Congress, an organization cited as a Communist front by the U. S. Attorney General's office.

What Lowman does not say is that the American Youth Congress, when founded in 1934, was so far from being Communist as to be called Nazi by the U. S. Communist Party. However the Communists gradually infiltrated this organization and by 1939 had taken it over to such an extent that it was cited as a Communist front in that year. This was a year after Adams had signed the call to the 1938 model legislature and it appears that he had no more dealings with it. Yet the brush left him pink from head to toe.

The National Parent Teachers Association demonstrates an obvious "Bias to the Left." At least this is the claim of Edgar C. Bundy of the Church League of America. Writing in that organization's "News and Views" for September, 1959, Bundy lists some 21 individuals who he claims are Communist or at least very leftist. According to Bundy they either spoke at a national convention of the PTA or wrote for its official magazine during the period 1947-59. Some of them, such as Elton Trueblood, would probably be considered moderate or even conservative by more rational observers. Others, for example Henry Steele Commager, G. Bromley Oxnam, and Ralph Sockman, are nationally known liberals but hardly Communists or even pro-Communists. Bundy cites only two, Erika Mann and Holland Roberts, as being actual Communists. But Miss Mann spoke and wrote in 1942 and Roberts in 1938, not even in the time span claimed. In 1942 Miss Mann was a refugee from Hitler's Germany and Russia was an American ally! Roberts was an education professor, a not unlikely choice for the PTA, in 1938. This was many years before he became director of the California Labor School, which has been cited by the U.S. Attorney General's office as subversive. Roberts himself was not identified as being a Communist Party member until 1957. Evidently it is essential that such organizations as the PTA must demonstrate some capacity for clairvoyance. Further, since Dorothy Thompson and William F. Knowland have also spoken before a national convention of the PTA, it should be evident that this organization is also an instrument of the conservative if not the ultra-conservative point of view.

These and other examples of guilt by association

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may be found in such works as "The Strange Tactics of Extremism" and "Danger on the Right," (*NAR*, Winter, 1964).

It is well known that this procedure is a common tactic of the radical left as well. Any action of the United States, no matter what the motive, is easily painted with the brush of capitalistic exploitation. When North Viet Nam was bombed recently by American planes, Moscow radio was quick to point out that this action was backed by Everett Dirksen and Dwight Eisenhower. Since these two had previously backed "that wildman Goldwater," their support was obviously sinister. Thus Johnson was aligned with Goldwater.

Naturally such arguments are a two-way street and which way one uses them depends on his own point of view. In addition it is possible for a given individual to assume a polka dot or chameleon character. For example it is extremely doubtful whether the Civil Rights Bill of 1964 would have passed the Senate or even reached the floor of that chamber without the strong support of the Senate Minority Leader, Everett Dirksen. But Dirksen later strongly endorsed a man who had not only voted against the bill on constitutional grounds but who seemed to favor an almost complete state freedom to act or not as it saw fit in this critical area. No doubt whether Dirksen is to be termed a friend or foe by the southern white supremacists will depend on the necessity of the moment.

The number of men and women accused and wronged by some such association, no matter how close or absurdly distant, real or imagined, is legion. There have been scores of books written on this subject and they will continue to be written. But in our concern for the injured we should not neglect the real reasons for the accusations. In the case of Joe McCarthy it was a means to reelection, for he desperately needed an issue. But in most cases it is not this. Nor is the real target the aggrieved individual himself but the cause which he serves.

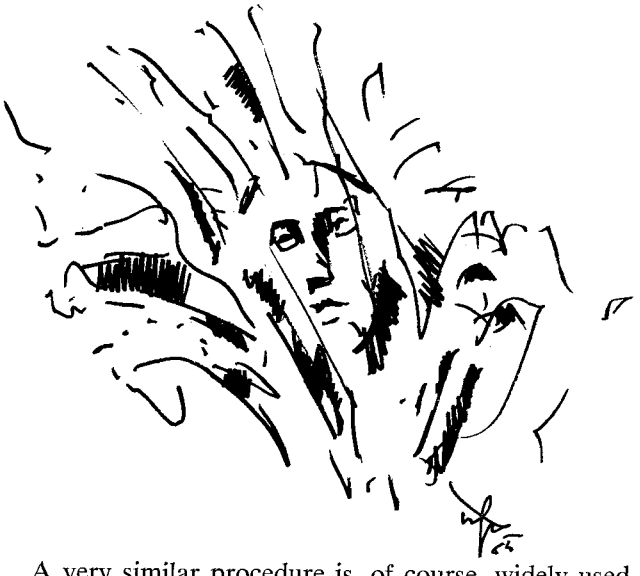
Following the aforementioned bombings of North Viet Nam there were protests and anti-American demonstrations throughout the world. The American press reports of a London march were typical of many others. We were informed that the marchers included "ban-the-bombers" and pacifists and were *led* by Communists. The implication is obvious. The non-Communists were dupes serving the Communist cause. It was patently impossible that they should have concluded independently that the American action was wrong or that it could lead to a nuclear holocaust.

But when one considers the American position in South Viet Nam the opposition would at least seem to have a legitimate argument. Under the Geneva pact the United States was permitted only 685 military men in all of Southeast Asia. Although the American government was not a party to the agreement, it indicated it would accept the restrictions. Moving into an area which was decidedly hostile to foreign interventionists (President Eisenhower himself estimated that in 1954 70% of the population favored Ho Chi Minh), the United States propped up an unpopular autocratic government and gradually increased the number of military "advisers" (but without public announcement) until there were more than 23,000 in January of 1965. Increasingly our advisers were being shot at and were shooting back.

Surely it is possible that one could oppose the American action without being a Communist, a pro-Communist, or a dupe of the reds.

Governor Johnson of Mississippi has charged that the invasion of Mississippi by civil rights workers in the summer of 1964 was inspired and led by Communists. According to Johnson his agents were at the Oxford, Ohio, orientation sessions and identified a number of known Communists and fellow-travelers. Their names were turned over to the FBI. Johnson conceded that most of the young people who went into Mississippi were well-intentioned. But they were immature and had been misguided by subversive elements whose only purpose was the "destruction of the American way of life."

When "Proposition Fourteen," generally regarded as anti-integrationist, was debated violently in the California elections last fall, it was evident that the John Birchers and other ultra-conservatives were among its strongest supporters. Yet opponents of this measure were mistaken to use this fact as an argument against its passage. It simply is no argument at all and should have carried no weight in the deliberations.



A very similar procedure is, of course, widely used. That is, it is common practice for eminent and not-so-eminent individuals to lend their names and backing to specific projects and movements in order to attempt to persuade others to join them. We witness this in every politicaal campaign. But the listing of names does not in itself constitute an argument for or against anything. These names are almost inevitably subscribed to a listing of the reasons why the undersigned deem an individual or action worthy of support. And although we may be drawn to consider the arguments by these names, it is the arguments themselves that we accept or reject and not the individuals proposing them.

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And why should it be otherwise when we consider an action which may incidentally be backed by Communists or John Birchers? There may be instances for which the very fact of Communist association is of some importance. But they will be rare, and when they do occur the reasoning which leads to this conclusion must be logically valid and carefully presented.

To allow any action to be rejected solely because of its extremist backers would be to court disaster. Consider the power that this policy would place in the hands of the Communists for example. During the McCarthy era, it was, for a time, practically impossible for an American scientist to obtain permission to attend a scientific conference held in a foreign country if Communists were to be present. Hence, Russia could prevent any American scientist from benefiting from attendance at any given conference by the simple expedient of sending one of their own representatives.

It would be nearly impossible to determine just why many conservatives oppose the graduated income tax. But it just might be related to the fact that this is one of the points of "The Communist Manifesto." And the fact that the Manifesto calls for free education for all children may be what leads others to oppose this "socialistic" aspect of American life. Robert Welch has recently charged that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. "for years has followed the Communist blueprint for subversion of our country." The brotherhood of all men is one of the stated aims of communism, but it is also mentioned in, among other places, the Bible.

Presumably the American citizen has some responsibility to avoid active aid to Communist and Communist-fed organizations. The same is true of Fascist groups. But what is his responsibility when he is charged with promoting, by word and deed, causes which are also espoused by these groups? Beyond determining that his own views are correctly stated—he is required to do nothing at all!

An individual should be called upon to answer only for his own views and actions and occasionally those of his associates. He should want those views to be backed up by as much force as logic and morality can muster. But if his actions are proper when conducted by himself alone, they are in no way compromised should some criminal or supposed criminal decide to follow the same path. The loan policies of the local bank are not automatically suspect if it is found that "juice" operators are at work as well.

Opposition of this type, guilt by association of ideas and condemnation of a belief, a movement, or a practice by reason of the nature of one of its proponents is of the cheapest kind. It is most frequently used by the morally bankrupt and those whose own positions are logically unsound. They strike out from fear of loss of personal privilege. It is most unfortunate that there are many sheep, with the same fears, to follow them. At best the method is regrettable. At worst it is evil. It is no better for being done in the name of Americanism.

PRM

CAGED

I have cornered
myself again.
I snap and hiss
but still

the weakness
comes. Wildness
leaks out, my
skin a sieve

as winter falls,
a hibernation
of bad dreams.
Senses fail

and I learn
to love the food
someone else's
claws have killed.

I now wear
the hobble
and the snare
like jewelry,

the ornaments
of a king. I
smile and purr
for visitors,

becoming the
animal they need.
The nose-ring
gently kisses

my upper lip;
collars and harness
are great awards
worn with pride.

I am back home
where all keys
are made of rubber;
all locks close

their keyholes
like sea creatures
tender to the touch,
all frail fist.

My thumbs have
disappeared in mist.
I love my bars,
my grave.

I look for
a stake where
I may burn
and burn.

Vern Rutsala

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UNREQUIRED READING

I plan soon to open *The Picked Wits Bookshop* and sell only plagiarized works.

An odd and frightening fact is that this world full of peace-loving men has always been shaped by men who functioned as philosophers of war, by men whose actions verify that however loudly they proclaim themselves peaceful souls in their hearts they know it's ruthlessness that pays off. We know this is so because it happens. The ruthless manipulate the truly peaceful. In your PTA, in your church-building committee, in your faculty, in politics, everywhere you seek you find those hungry for power getting power. Some attain it subtly by innuendo attacks on their opponents, some by using lies, half-truths, or by concealing truths. People seek prominence at all costs because prominence is essential to power—in education, in business, in churches, in governments. And the majority pacifists by their very nomenclature sit on their hands while the ruthless dictate the direction and regulation of the peace-lovers' lives.

Why not give the philosophy of peace a chance?

There is, of course, but one possible way to success. Instead of one philosopher of peace being tolerated as Schweitzer is because he is remote and no threat, and instead of running the risk of being stamped out as Christ was stamped out because He was a threat, the pacifists of the world must unite in a new anonymous organization. The sole purpose of the organization will be to *act,* against *ruthless* power-seekers on all levels. After the *first* act - - - - - !

The group can call itself the world's M.P.'s. Militant Pacifists. Form your cell today.

Prisons are full of people who demonstrated that they were incapable of assuming responsibility for their own acts. To correct this condition, men are locked up in prisons to learn responsibility in a setting where their every movement is scheduled; they get up by the bell, eat by the bell, work by the bell, change clothes and shine shoes by the bell. They are fed, clothed, housed, churched by schedule. Smoking tobacco, soap, clothes and library books are provided. Somehow, in a situation where he has no chance to practice responsibility for any fragment of his life, society expects this warped man to learn responsibility.

In a mournful way, our educational institutions suffer from a variation of this same malady. From kindergarten through the sixteenth grade, perhaps even beyond that, society schools its young and expects youth to emerge as self-examining adults capable of assuming responsibility, of making decisions, of running this whole sad world. How do we hope to accomplish this miracle in the schools? By prolonging childhood into adolescence, adolescence into the twenties? By protecting youth from every valid experience which might provide opportunities to learn to deal sensibly with booze, with lovely sex, with the humdrum dreariness of economic existence? School is in danger of becoming no more than a substitute parental authority forcibly attempting to keep men caged in the anxieties of innocent, ignorant, manageable childhood. If the present trend is not reversed, in another decade the majority of the population in this country will be twenty-five year adolescents who have read a great deal about life but haven't yet lived at all.

The mortician listened sympathetically to the widow. "He really wanted to be buried in a blue suit, not that old brown one, but I just can't afford to buy a new blue suit now."

"I'm sure your husband would understand," the mortician soothed and the widow went home.

When she returned to the funeral home the next day, the widow was quite upset to find her husband's body clothed in a blue suit. "But I told you that I can't afford a blue suit," she cried.

"Let me explain," the mortician said. "Right after you left yesterday a lady came in whose husband wanted to be buried in a brown suit and he had only a blue suit. So you see, it was a very simple thing to change heads."

The world is full of loonies. It always has been. It always will be. Theodore Roosevelt called them the "lunatic fringe." Their compulsions and attitudes are as various and numerous as species of insects. The oddest characteristic of eccentricity is that it isn't really unusual at all. The same peculiarities exist in all of us. Loonies merely concentrate their energies and lives on one or more of the prevalent and logical foibles existing in all of us. This dedicated concentration lifts them out of the crowd, out of the ordinary, and sometimes right out of this life.

We all save things but when the Collyer brothers filled a mansion with indiscriminately hoarded junk, we thought them odd. We all believe in physical fitness but when the Scottish jurist Lord Monboddo slept on a board, took daily cold showers, and rode horseback from London to Edinburgh, his eighteenth century contemporaries thought him a kook.

Many volumes by a diversity of excellent writers are concerned with these unusual souls in individual biographies and collections of essays. Here are three collections for a sampling:

The Lunatic Fringe, Gerald Johnson. Lippincott, N.Y. 1957. 248 pp.

English Eccentrics, Edith Sitwell. Vanguard, N.Y. 1957. 376 pp.

The Dolphin's Skin: Six Studies in Eccentricity, James Turner. Cassell, London, 1956. 218 pp.

The British either harvest more oddities or love them more because they keep a fuller chronicle. For a beginning, I urge a dip into Gerald Johnson's *Lunatic Fringe* because he deals entertainingly with a mixed bouquet of native American bloomers.

BER

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AN ACRE OF BEANS: A FABLE

A few years ago in a small African colony there was a poor family who earned a meagre living growing beans. They were content in their misery, knowing no better way of life. They had heard stories of more prosperous nations, but didn't believe them possible.

One day a stranger came to their tiny farm. He dogged the farmer's steps all day, propounding various ideas, and suggesting various cures for their poverty. He insisted that the Wicked Foreigners who owned the colony be driven out, and local people put in their stead. He related in glowing terms the brilliant future that awaited the colony once it threw off the shackles of Evil Imperialism. The farmer, made suspicious by generations of mistreatment, merely smiled, bade the stranger good-bye, and promptly forgot the incident.

Some months later the colony revolted against the Wicked Imperialists; the farmer's land was overrun by the Imperialist army, his beans were trampled into the ground, and his house was burned down. The farmer joined the insurgents.

World opinion forced the Imperialists to grant independence to the colony. The farmer, in rags and nearly starving, went to the celebration in the capital. There he saw many wondrous sights, not least of which was the stranger, now grown rather fat, riding in an automobile.

The farmer returned to his farm, replanted his beans, rebuilt his house, and wondered at the ways of providence.

In time, discontent grew in the former colony. Another stranger appeared, urging the farmer to join in overthrowing the outrageous bureaucracy. The farmer merely smiled, bade the stranger good-bye and prepared to flee to another country with his wife and children.

That night, however, an army passed by the farm. They trampled the farmer's beans into the ground, burned his house down, and put the entire family to the sword.

To this day no one is really sure whose army it was.

T. D. C. Kuch
Arlington, Virginia

FEMALE FACADE

Foregoing my college Christmas vacation home, I took a temporary job as a department store detective. In the course of this two week Sherlock stint, besides stymying shoplifters, I found my admiration and attitude toward womanhood trampled like a turd in the turf.

Graciousness, pleasantness, and femininity are no longer a part of the female form. The appalling fact is that women are becoming faceless and bear no resemblance to the beauty bounties that memories insist they are. As a boy, I recall my mother brushing her heavy, luxurious brown hair, page boy style, no less than 100 strokes a day. I found it a delightful task to sit at her feet and count for her.

The degrading demons that have a demoniacal power over women today are curlers and pants. From early morning until the store closed, I saw the inevitable pants and the everpresent curlers. Pink curlers and purple pants. Being seen in this state creates no shame; they are shameless. They have become servants of a styleless trend that sickens the stomach and fails to whet the appetite of a companion-seeking gentleman.

This daytime affliction for curlers and pants encourages the imagination. Just how are these creatures outfitted for sleep and bed? Guessing is my game, not being a benedict, but I hazard the horror that oil and grease are their evening additive. It can only be out of basic need that man is drawn to this ludicrous lamentable lady of our time.

Gentlemanly, the average male indulges himself with the question, WHY? Is it his fault that the female species has come to feel that he has no aversions regarding their dishabille, simply because he accepts them "as is"? Retirement has claimed La Femme Fatal.

This female complacency is catastrophic. Men may find themselves more rewarded with each others' companionship than with that of women.

Girls and women get back into dresses. Leave the sticy-icky hair-sprayed high-high hair-do for the television ads—men want you smooth and silky, day and night.

Put your curlers in the closet and your pants in the incinerator. You'll revive that vital image of women that men NEED daily.

M. L. Post
Evanston, Illinois

PERSONS I LOVE

My big Labrador Retriever sits outside the living room window, his black wet nose twitching, brown eyes imploring, and the back half of his tail rising six inches off the ground and returning. He wants to come in. I have let him out-and-in three times during the last fifteen minutes and I am sick of him. I shout through the window, "You stay there!" At the sound

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of my voice his tail lifts again, and as he senses my anger, the tail quiets until only the tip is rising an inch. He twitches his nose, looks me straight in the eye, begging. What am I to do? A person I love at one of his most irritating moments.

I know my dog is equal to me and I laugh at those professors and preachers who tell me man is superior —symbol maker, rememberer, abstract thinker. And animal—inferior, instinctive brute grubbing in the earth, his nose coated with mud. I see no difference. The professors I know grub in books for symbols the writers never thought of. When presented with a piece of writing by a student, they reach for a red pencil. Their instincts are all wrong. They know instantly, without reflection, that their students have nothing worthwhile to tell them. Their knowledge is all wrong. I think they are like dogs—only not as playful, not as ready to chase a stick for joy. With boards and mortar and brick they must be putting together buildings that stand eyesores on the campus. My dog's hole is a superior and natural construction. He pulls the earth out rapidly with his great claws and creates a neat pile of sandy soil behind him. He smells something down there. He's not sure what, but after it he burrows—with legs, paws, snout, and whole being. He does not sit down and ask whether the legislature will approve an expenditure. He digs the hole he needs and wants.

Thoreau and Emerson and Gauguin and Van Gogh studied the thought and art of the Orient. They recognized that the Oriental world view of animals is more accurate than the Western view. The animals are part of my universe and I part of theirs. And so the stones, trees, weeds. We are all in this thing together and the evidence is everywhere about us. We are all dying. We were all born. Our seeds are carried on the wind and our flowers fade and crumble. One of my dearest friends died last year, Murray Jones, a painter in his forties who contracted a disease which took away his muscular strength. His wife listened for him to tell her what strokes to make on the canvas. He's as dead now as the dried frog skin and bones I saw at the edge of the lake yesteday. When I last saw Murray he was as alive as that green and yellow spotted jumper a few months ago. Murray was tender and hardminded at the same time, like a great green beautiful frog, soft of touch and steel in the jump. I will miss Murray and I will miss the frog. I do not deceive myself. I will miss Murray more than the frog because I knew him better. He meant infinitely more to me. His ways were more various, but maybe only because as man I see men more clearly than frogs. But I am comforted to accept the frog along with Murray and me and my Laborador Retriever. Why say they come from different worlds?

I see only one world. I haven't been to others. I don't want to go to the moon. I like this world, all of us here together in our dumbness, our wisdom. Our plainness, our variety. Our thinness, our richness. Our truth, our hypocrisy. That damned dog is sitting outside again—I let him out as I wrote this—on the edge of the hill, head up, looking over the lake below him, noble, sleek in the sunshine, calm, surveying, nostrils held high waiting for the wafting of life in his world, my world. Last week he entered the house his coat all filled with excrement—what kind I don't know, foul smelling, horrible. Why he got into that mess I'll never know.

Ken Macrorie
Kalamazoo, Michigan

REPORT FROM TOBOR

Earthmen are the most interesting but inconsistent forms that I have monitored. Experimental findings of scientists are ignored and the tribulations of generations forgotten. Trial and error, instinctive behavior, and imitation of parents become popular substitutes for thinking. Children, whom parents profess to love, seldom benefit from adult experience, since each child is treated as if he were the first of the species. Demanding obedience and respect, the sires plead and chastise without setting examples worthy of imitation.

Females, chief exponents of vanity, refuse to nurse babies and hastily substitute secretions of an ungulate. The sucking urge remains unsatisfied and leads to finger-sucking, lollypop-lapping, toothpick-chewing, and tobacco-smoking. These feeble efforts at compensation produce vast economic systems, mammary substitutes, which would collapse if the masses realized the nature of their origin.

The young are tormented by tales of monsters, witches, stepmothers, and other ogres who persecute the innocent until the stories are nearly concluded. Happy endings are affixed, lights hastily doused, and frightened moppets left to transfer fear into dream states. This subconscious torture of youngsters is retaliation against children conceived by accident and later tolerated because of fear of retribution from a non-entity called "society." Society is a word used as a refuge whenever logic dictates that man admit his personal responsibility. Belief in society permits assignment of blame to a nebulous "group" rather than the individual. It is easier to hide guilt in a crowd.

Evolution renders some youngsters immune to psychological parental mishandling but less fortunate fledglings, limited solely to physical maturity, avenge themselves on "society" as members of a protected clan known as "politicians."

You indicated my last report lacked credibility, and you recommended my return for thought orientation. Rest assured of my rationality, but my assignment is a severe challenge for any normal human. This latest communique furnishes additional insight concerning the inhabitants and confirms the fact that instability lies in this remarkable world rather than within my-

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self. For example: Earth's reaction to self-awareness is alien to our experience. Refusing to accept scientific evidence for man's raison d'etre, pride necessitates earthlings to imagine themselves the universe's sole intelligent inhabitants. Naturally, the resulting loneliness and futility produce great tensions. Frustrations are released by efforts at self-extinction through misuse of science. Logical solutions by informed men are neutralized by assassination, incarceration, ostracism, or ridicule, but most frequently, thinkers are joked into oblivion by a malicious group called "comedians."

Progress is retarded by a perverse idea which takes precedence over the religions they profess. All idolize the deity Time, whose temple is called a Clock. Little is accomplished since each assigns himself watchman of this shrine, hoping to witness a miracle performed therein. Many carry replicas of His dwelling and each deed is governed by the posturings of movable portions of His home. There is little necessity to think for those who parrot, "Time solves problems."

Ignorance of physiology prevents a clear concept of sex. Guilt feelings compel them to prepare for death upon attaining the age of reason. Yet, each evades problems as if he were the first man granted eternal life. Procrastination is their diet.

Still, I do not recommend destruction of this planet as a menace. One favorable quality transcends these weaknesses. Biological evolution has imposed a painfully recurrent thought governor on the female population. Early adjustment to this reproduction-linked inconvenience produces the strong compensatory product: women.

Catalyzed by this monthly reminder, and abetted by vanity, females develop a vast capacity for pain tolerance, leading to the ability to commiserate with other suffering humans. The elite females are known as "ladies." These desirable creatures endeavor to permit men to feel superior, a role males cherish but seldom merit. Ladies befriend, listen and love to an extent that more than atones for all earthly behavioral defects.

My recommendation is that terrestrial existence be permitted to continue. To ascertain males and females relating on a more equal basis, I request permission once more to activate my plan for the destruction of all factories producing men's watches.

Benjamin Bluitt
Chicago, Illinois

LETTERS NEVER MAILED DEPARTMENT

Arkansaw, Wisconsin
April 8, 1965

The Honorable Earl Warren
Chief Justice of the United States
Supreme Court Building
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Chief Justice:

Please do not think me impertinent. I am a simple seeker.

This evening's paper carried a small headline announcing that "SEATTLE MAN, 32, GETS TEN YEARS ON FORGERY CHARGE." The amount of the forged check was $33.47. This figures out to be approximately 62,817 minutes of incarceration for each dollar of anti-social behavior.

Within the month, in separate states, two former bankers were released after less than four years of imprisonment each. Each had embezzled more than $1,000,000. I calculate this to be approximately 2 minutes of incarceration for each dollar of anti-social behavior.

A few hours of research could supply thousands of examples of the first case cited and dozens of the second.

This disparity not only puzzles me, it angers me.

All my life it has puzzled me and angered me.

For six and a half years as an employee of penal institutions, it rankled deep within me: among the thousands of prisoners with whom I worked, not a baker's dozen of them had more than a few dollars to their names. For all practical purposes, almost 100 per cent of the inmates of prisons across the country today were poor people before they became convicts.

Is it possible that only poor people are guilty of criminal behavior?

If there is a simple explanation for this peculiar state of affairs, please reveal it to me.

Should you also find this situation odd, I implore you to continue to plug the legal loopholes and to take every drastic measure available to insure that justice begin to fall on rich and poor as democratically as rain.

Respectfully yours,
Diogenes Jones

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The Compleat Volunteer

Brickbats to Bicycles

Jerry Fite

A contingent of Peace Corps Volunteers landing in a Near East country recently was met by a mob of chanting, sign-carrying nationals protesting American imperialism. One Volunteer wryly remarked, "The trouble with us is that we don't understand these people. Sometimes we mistake demonstrations, brick-throwing and embassy burnings as indications of anti-American sentiment."

After working in a small village in that country for three months, another Volunteer, James Morrissey, of Portland, Ore. wrote, "That day at the airport I wanted to either go back home or grab a baseball bat and wade in. After working with the people, and contrasting their kindness and friendliness with the surliness of that mob, things are a little clearer. I don't think they know what the words mean."

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A favorite Peace Corps story tells of a Volunteer in Latin America watching a demonstration with one of his host country friends. When the crowd started chanting "Yankee go home," the Volunteer's friend joined the chorus.

"If you feel that way, I'm leaving," said the Volunteer. "I won't stay where I'm not wanted."

"No, stay," replied the national, "we want the Yankees to go home—you Peace Corps Volunteers stay."

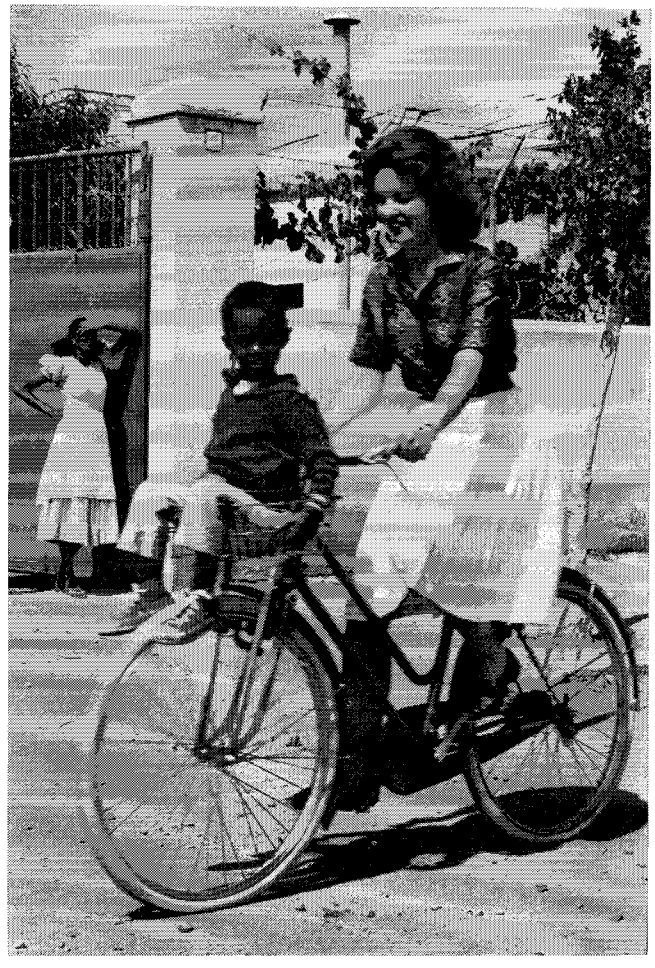
Hostility is directed to the unseen capitalists, materialists, and imperialists. The volunteer, who lives next door and works side-by-side, doesn't fit this category.

Why do newly-independent countries apparently not appreciate the millions of dollars poured into them by the U.S.? The first day of my assignment to a Tunisian orphanage as a Volunteer, a sports demonstration was given in my honor by the school basketball team. The players were wearing white shorts with red and blue lettering across the back. One boy's shorts had an emblem of two clasped hands across the seat. The shorts had been made from wheat sacks labeled, "Donated by the U.S.A." I asked one of the boys where they had gotten their uniforms. "We traded olive oil to America for them," he said.

The Tunisian government, independent since 1956, wants young Tunisians to take pride in their freedom. Other new nations feel the same. They have just escaped colonialism, and want to be self-supporting. Government leaders are afraid that financial aid brings with it political obligation. Many of them take the essential dollars, then go to extremes to show that they owe us nothing but money.

My job in Tunisia was teaching physical education to four hundred orphaned and underprivileged children in a remote mountain village near the Algerian border. The school, like fourteen others established by President Habib Bourguiba after Tunisia's independence from France in 1956, uses barracks of former French army camps for housing and classrooms. Children attending the school live there the year round, and receive meager food and clothing supplies, plus an elementary and trade education. The teachers are undertrained, and usually accept jobs in the orphanages because they do not qualify to teach in the good public schools.

Since returning to the U.S. in June, 1964, I have often been asked to describe the frustrations of a Peace Corps Volunteer. Volunteers feel that the word "frustration" is used too much, and the question usually refers more to living conditions rather than to the subtle differences between cultures which generally cause real frustration. Most Volunteers do not live in mud huts. I had electricity and running water in one of the most isolated villages in Tunisia. I feel that modern plumbing is no real drawback to a Volunteer's success. Frustrations in the classroom were not much more difficult or different than those encountered by American teachers in American schools. Simply, from a teaching viewpoint, I was filling in where a teacher was needed until a Tunisian teacher was qualified to take my place. Real frustration appeared when Tunisians would think of me as "The American" rather than as a teacher, or when I would think of my students as "the Tunisians."



When I heard someone refer to me as the American, I knew they were wondering why I was there. An embassy official in Tunisia said that the African definition of America is "the golden commissary in the sky where every one has plenty of everything." In a recent press release from Tunis, a

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Tunisian judge was quoted as saying, "I simply don't understand the people who would drop perfectly good careers and jobs in America to come ride bicycles in Tunisia." Another official said, "Americans don't have to ride bicycles to impress us. What we want from them is efficiency not acrobatics." When a student in a classroom refuses to attempt to solve a difficult equation, it is a question of teaching skill and patience. When Tunisians think I came there to ride a bicycle it's frustrating.

It is frustrating to know that a Tunisian official might think that an architect driving a $2,000 automobile to work is more efficient than the same architect riding a $5.00 bicycle to the same job. Volunteers are supposedly the products of a materialistic society. Ironically, one of our greatest problems is the attitude of the Tunisian toward manual labor, and his desire for the hated American status symbols. Youngsters go to school in order to escape the stigma of belonging to the working class and its poverty. After three or four years of education, they often feel it beneath their dignity to work with their hands. Americans ride bicycles because they are cheap, and because they are often the only method of transportation needed. When a vehicle is essential to the job, it can be furnished, either by the Peace Corps or by the host country.

The real problem seems to be the inability of Africans at this point to understand the motivation of Peace Corps Volunteers, and to believe that a sincere desire to help and to promote friendship and understanding is a stronger trait in the average American than the dollar sign and politics.

I did not become cynical during my two years in Tunisia. I feel that I am not being overly critical now. Outwardly, there is little difference between Volunteers and citizens of emerging nations other than physical semblance of wealth. This disparity is easy to correct. Bridges can be built, schools erected, and classes held. It took me two years to realize that the real problem is one of understanding. It is practically indefinable, and judging from the above reports, is a long way from being solved. This is frustrating. It is also, to me, the reason that the Peace Corps must continue to be an essential part of American and foreign development.

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A Low Comedian

Mary Margaret Lawrence

To the resident of the cosmopolitan cities of Europe and America, the crow may seem a remote, even a legendary creature, although it is said that there are over four hundred species and sub-species of this bird, living in all parts of the world except New Zealand. (How and why the New Zealanders should be spared, I do not know.)

It is only when you set foot on Indian soil, and live in inescapable intimacy with him, that the full impact of the crow's diverse personality is realized. You will never quite forget him.

I met my first Indian crow ten years ago. He sat in a tree outside the window of my Bombay Hotel and cawed derisively at me as I watched the gleaming white ship (my last link to civilization?) disappear over the horizon. He knew I was homesick. He knew all the doubts that were hammering at my mind. How could I live in this strange malodorous land where tiny girls with ankle-bells danced gaily in the streets and begged for a few coins, while huge vultures wheeled purposefully above the Tower of Silence. He knew everything that was in my mind, and he sat in his tree and laughed.

More than half a century earlier, Mark Twain, also newly arrived in a Bombay Hotel, was disturbed in a very different sense by his introduction to the Indian crow. It was not his peace of mind that suffered, but his slumbers, rudely interrupted at 5:00 a.m. by the raucous comments of this profane bird, possibly an earlier incarnation of my own tormentor. Here is Mark Twain's analysis of his personality.

"I suppose he is the hardest lot that wears feathers . . . one can't make a bird like that in a day. He has been reincarnated more times than Shiva; and he has kept a sample of each incarnation, and fused it into his constitution. In the course of his evolutionary promotions, his sublime march toward ultimate perfection, he has been a gambler, a low comedian, a dissolute priest, a fussy woman, a blackguard, a scoffer, a liar, a thief, a spy, an informer . . . a conspirator, a rebel . . . a meddler, and an intruder, a busybody, an infidel, and a wallower in sin for the mere love of it."

This is a long string of accusations to hurl at any creature. Is there nothing to be said in its defense? According to Hindu legend, there is. A story that has been passed from father to son for many years tells of the crows whose young ones were repeatedly devoured by a black serpent that lurked in the trunk of the tree where they built their nest. The female crow begged her mate to find a safer tree but he refused, saying, "My beloved, away with apprehensions. The Raja's son comes daily and bathes in the adjacent pool. With thy beak having seized his chain of gold, thou must bring it and place it in this hollow trunk."

The obedient hen crow did as she was told, putting the chain near the sleeping serpent. The Raja's servants, finding the serpent with the chain of gold, promptly put the serpent to death. Surely no one can doubt the intelligence and cunning of a bird who is able to remove the threat to his home and family without the slightest risk of danger to himself.

Even though Mark Twain has neglected to mention the intelligence of this remarkable bird, he has put his finger squarely on one of the crow's most dominant traits when he calls him a conspirator.

Last summer a pair of crows built their nest in a tree just outside the dining room of an Indian gentleman in New Delhi. The man paid little attention to the untidy collection of twigs they had thrown together in his tree. A tolerant man, he soon became accustomed to their incessant noise, but he found his patience wearing thin as day after day they appeared regularly at meal times, waited until his back was turned, then swooped down, through the open window, to steal the food from his table. One morning, after losing a fast draw for the last piece of toast, he lost his temper. He stomped out of the house, hatchet in hand, and began chopping at the branch of the tree where the nest reposed. The pair cawed loudly, marshalling into immediate attack all their friends, cousins, brothers and cousin-brothers. He weathered the storm long enough to complete his task, then retreated to the

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house, thinking the matter was ended. It wasn't. Every time he stepped out of his house, the two evicted crows set up a terrible cawing, and each time battalions of crows responded, zooming enthusiastically into battle.

These attacks might have continued indefinitely, had it not been for his wife.

"Darling," she said, "I think there is something special about you that the crows notice. I think it's your bald head, shining in the sun. Wear a hat today, and see what happens."

After a bit of grumbling, he wore the hat, and peace descended once again on his house. His wife proudly declared it was because the crows no longer recognized him, but in the back of his mind he was never sure. He could not shake off the uneasy suspicion that the crows had decided that a man so easily influenced by his wife was no longer worthy of warfare, and had decided to ignore him.

I have gradually, reluctantly, come to the conclusion that in this land of long-established male supremacy, even the crows differentiate between the sexes. How else can I account for their behavior on the day I had lunch with a plantation owner's wife during her husband's absence? It was a warm, sultry day, and we had tired of the house, so decided to take advantage of a slight breeze in the garden. The servant laid the table in the shade of a leafy tree, and the crows began to gather. One flew down and hopped experimentally over the white tablecloth, then flew back to his perch to wait until lunch was served. In exasperation, my hostess declared, "I'll get rid of them. Just wait. The moment they see my husband's rifle they simply disappear." She went into the house and reappeared with the favorite rifle of her marksman husband. She raised it to her shoulder with a flourish, expecting to see a black flurry of disappearing wings. They moved not an inch, but sat on their perches and laughed. I almost expected to see them roll on the ground and hold their sides, so huge was their amusement.

Too disheartened to try a shot, my hostess put the rifle away and we battled with our uninvited guests for every bite.

You cannot live in India and remain completely indifferent to the crow. You may be sickened by his scavenging, yet willing to admit the necessity of his work. You may curse him as a thief, yet applaud his sense of humor. You will wonder at his sense of justice as you watch a group of these birds debate among themselves, reach a decision, and suddenly turn on one of their members and peck him to death for an offense of which you have no knowledge.

As he has a court of justice he also has a funeral ceremony. He and his companions will soar from tree to post, then hop to the dust-covered body of a fallen comrade, loudly bewailing their grief.

You may never go so far as to say you *like* the crow, but you may one day admit that you have a certain respect, a grudging admiration for him.

In final summation, Mark Twain says, "The strange result, the incredible result, of this patient accumulation of all these damnable traits is, that he does not know what care is, he does not know what sorrow is, he does not know what remorse is, his life is one long thundering ecstasy of happiness, and he will go to his death untroubled, knowing that he will soon turn up again as an author or something, and be even more intolerably capable and comfortable than he ever was before."

In support of this theory, I offer the story of the dramatic death of a recently deceased crow. Caught unexpectedly by the bullet of a youthful hunter, the crow did not die immediately. He clung to his perch, a tree branch that hung above a well-traveled street. He chose to fall in front of a certain car which bore the painted legend, "The Animal's Friend." The car screeched to a halt, and out jumped a small, angry lady, who tenderly examined the crow. Seeing that he was indeed dead, she laid him gently, reluctantly, under a bush and drove away.

I wonder—will any one of us be able to die with such a flair, in exactly the right place at exactly the right time?

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THE NAZI PARTY

E. N. Peterson

The Nazi defeat in 1945 has not served to end its dominance in the world's imagination as the brutes in hob-nailed boots endlessly marching to blaring trumpets and pounding drums over a prostrate Europe. The swastikas still adorning the front-page rapings on many a supermarket magazine symbolize a terror that the world cannot forget.

The Nazis' horrible heyday so shocked the conscience of the world, dwarfing mass murders performed by men in other uniforms, that one needs only to whisper, "The Nazis are rising again," and a shudder descends the spine of the world. Stories that "they" are planning to seize power again have as hard time in dying as the rumors that Hitler or Bormann are still somewhere alive, protected by powerful friends and only waiting for the proper moment to return. Perhaps an eye-witness report about the Nazi powerful of the past, observations made as a by-product of a research project, will serve to indicate the vigor of the Nazi movement twenty years after.

Research on the relationships between party and state leaders on the local and central level offered manifold occasions to discuss their past with party leaders and to observe their present. By interviewing the powerful Gauleiter (Provincial leaders), Kreisleiter (county leaders) mayors, commanders of police, city councilmen and many an ordinary citizen, one could tap the backbone of the once powerful party. (Names, available on request, will be veiled because most of the interviewed prize highly the privacy of a peaceful old age.)

First target was one of the few who have published an *Apologia,* Gauleiter W., easily located in his home town, where he lives without attracting any attention from his former "subjects." His apartment was four flights up in an old house, which one so desiring would term shabby. The ringing of the bell brought a shy, gray-haired lady, his wife, clearly worried about the stranger inquiring about the former Gauleiter —a reporter could mean more unpleasant headlines. Her husband stayed during the week in Munich, where he worked for a large manufacturer, who more out of pity than gratitude had provided a low-paying job as "research director," a pseudonym for librarian.

Persistence brought an appointment on a Sunday afternoon. The fearful lady ushered me into a simple but middle-class living room, where at a lace-covered table sat the Gauleiter, deliberately dignified, a small, unimposing and balding man with none of the bluster and arrogance one would expect. Here sat instead a mild-mannered, but alert clerk, such as he had been before 1933. Lacking all but a slight hint of a fanatic, Gauleiter W. answered every question with a smiling directness, rapid understanding and a disarming local dialect. (Even when a Gauleiter he had been untypical; where he is remembered, it is without exception as well-meaning, "decent for a Nazi," if not overly strong.)

As frequently the case, the first interview soon shifted to his post-war years in American jails. (Anyone whose job was important was under "automatic arrest," usually for three years, brought to trial later by a German "denazification" court. W. was found guilty of no crime other than having supported the Nazi Party.) While in prison, W. had volunteered to testify

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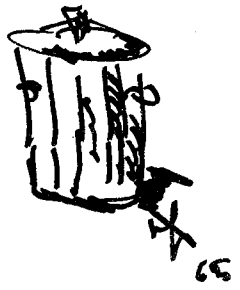
20 Years After



against war criminals, and had therefore stayed in custody longer. This service brought him no praise from anti-Nazis and cost him most friendships with former colleagues, who came to doubt that he had ever really belonged. His isolation he accepts as comprehensible. About those who still hoped for a revival of the party, as did his Kreisleiter S., he could only shake his head at such blindness to facts. Though the end of the Party was disaster for Germany, its beginning to him was still of sincerest idealism, when Hitler had seemed the answer to all problems foreign and domestic.

Himmler and Bormann were to blame. (Bormann was almost universally declared the devil himself, preventing the party faithful from seeing or talking to Hitler.) Still largely unable to believe that he had been wrong on Hitler from the beginning, W. did not think it possible that Hitler knew what Bormann and Himmler were doing. Yet he was willing to admit that Hitler's actions led to war, even if Hitler had not planned on war from the beginning.

Gauleiter W.'s primary goal is to provide if possible for his old age and for his wife. After a court action he was granted the small pension due him as a minor civil servant. He finds it difficult to understand why he was not accorded a governor's pension, inasmuch as he served his area as governor for 11 years. No one had ever been able to show his having personally ordered any arrest, or of abusing his power for personal aggrandizement. His other economic hope was to receive some compensation, as ordinary citizens had done, for a bombed-out house. The official rejection of his bid—decided by a former underling, also then a fervent Nazi—was based on the argument that the house had resulted indirectly from party power, that he could not have built the house on his clerk's salary. Not bitter about the fact that he faces an old age, now 74, with little to show for a life of work, he can almost understand why the citizens who treat him kindly as one individual to the other, cannot politically as a city grant him a pension beyond the minimum.

His life is a lonely one, while at work in the big city, returning evenings to a simple room with only a bed, table, chair and dresser, a tenant among people who have no idea of the position he once held. Beyond survival for himself and his always unpolitical wife, he hopes by the book he has published, or the one now in manuscript, to show the world that not all Nazis were criminals, that idealists like himself were carried along by intense nationalism born of four years in the trenches into a party which he discovered too late was led by mad men and criminals.

Neither of the other two Gauleiter contacted had made as much of an adjustment to the contemporary world. Gauleiter H. had spent his quota of years in prison, but these were delayed by his year-long efforts to hide. His new life and name might have continued him into the present as an unknown Gauleiter, had his wife, the only one to whom he confided his address, not betrayed him to the police. (She wanted a divorce and his arrest helped). When tried, H. was accused of a more or less specific crime, responsibility for inciting a mob to kill a downed airman. After five years of prison he was released, and returned to his earlier dentist profession where he recreated a comfortable practice, albeit in a new area.

Without problems of economic survival, H's bitterness centers on the wife who betrayed him. When he thinks of politics it is mostly of the "H—plan for economic development," which he had implemented in his province. Although a large and imposing man with strong traces of the demagogue—"I gave my province to Hitler"—the fire is gone. He lacks the confidence of former colleagues who think him a bit mad, the best evidence—his senseless attacks on the church in a solid Catholic province. In his re-

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mote resort town, he seems to be of neither this nor the past world. He belongs to neither.

The third Gauleiter, F., fits more neatly the stereotype. Comfortably ensconced in an upper-middle-class apartment near a major industrial center, he seems to have maintained some contact with former colleagues and to be engaged in semi-political activity. It was he who welcomed the American historian, who created such a furor among the anti-Nazis by arguing in a book published first in German that Britain and Poland were alone responsible for the war. (He was usually denied the chance to address public meetings.) This "revisionism" came as a breath of spring to the party faithful, who have rarely had any facts from the past to please them. That an American—of all people—should absolve Hitler of all guilt "proves" what they had always believed.

Gauleiter F. disclaims political ambition; he only wants to "set the record straight" and rescue his and Hitler's reputation from the lies spread by ungrateful Germans. (It was most odd to hear him speak of *Der Fuehrer* with with glowing eyes and then point to the chair I was using as that in which Hitler had always sat.)

F.'s conviction, physical vigor, and commanding manner were unique among those interviewed. He may possibly have some kind of sympathetic group among industrialists. A close friend, an ex-S.S. leader and economic mobilizer, had held an excellent job in industry. This job was lost, however, when his employers learned that he had played a part in welcoming the infamous American historian. (Both feared thay they would be arrested were their private remarks to me made public. Anti-Semitic remarks have in a few cases led to an arrest.) Yet it is doubtful that any statement by F. would do more than ruin politically anyone whom he would favor. In politics the charge of being "brown" is almost as effective as the charge of being "red." So remote from this reality, Gauleiter F. was one of the few that one could visualize slipping on his party uniform and swastika, marching through the streets Heiling Hitler and beating up "Communist" opposition, as if the world and Germany had not changed since 1933. The iron ring of official hatred of all things Nazi make such a march a far away dream.

Another such dreamer was Kreisleiter S., whose wife answered the door and seemed more sympathetic than suspicious of the Herr Professor waiting in the hall of their lower-middle-class apartment. She conferred in whispers with S., who was clearly unsympathetic. The result was a compromise, "Come again in a month when my husband has more time." After repeated appeals, the first interview was held in an unheated room cool as S.'s manner. It was devoted almost exclusively to bitter memories of a long series of American prisons, the brutal treatment including a ridiculously small number of toilets, the loss of all his property, the 1945 suffering of his wife thrown out into the street. As though betraying a long-kept secret, he admitted he did not like Americans.

The second and third interviews were in the room warmed by spring thawing and involved probing questions about the local party and were met with carefully guarded comments about a party without fault. By the fourth meeting the semi-secret convictions of the Kreisleiter were evident: the Party was always right; Gauleiter W. had betrayed that party by claiming to have been only a stupid idealist; Hitler was the greatest man of our times. "A man such at that comes only once in every thousand years." (The interviewer could only mutter, "Thank God!") S. had nothing to repent: he had stolen from no one, injured no one directly —something borne out in his denazification trial. Of course, the Jews should not have been killed—he did not know how such a thing could happen, but like every one else, he had known nothing of Auschwitz—but to be honest, he had always thought the Jews should leave Germany. Where had he learned his anti-semitism? A smile and answer by a man who had first wanted to become a priest. "In the church."

S. had an engineering job, exactly as before and during the Nazi era. Penniless and homeless in 1948 when released from prison, he had since risen to the Volkswagen stage of recovery. He was prospering under democracy, but Nazi Germany was to him purer and cleaner, less materialistic, and above all, the Communist menace had been properly recognized. "Believe me, the Communists will beat you Americans. Just wait and see."

S. is relatively unknown in his city. The few who take note of his actions have observed a half-dozen zealots who assemble in his home and sing the Nazi Horst Wessel Song. On such happy occasions the neighbors in the apartment above pound the floor in protest until the music stops. Among ex-party colleagues one hears repeatedly, "S. was always a stubborn man. You could never teach him anything." He is

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considered something of an anachronism, not completely harmless but nearly so.

More pathetic than annoying is Kreisleiter M., with ambivalent attitudes shaped by a bitter party fight in which he was one of the losers and by a subsequent bitterer personal tragedy. The party fight, a three-year angry battle in the mid 30's between the hard-headed leader and the fast-talking mayor, had led first to the firing of the mayor and then the release of the Kreisleiter. He had drifted out of party work even before the war, during which his older son was killed in Russia. The younger, with his father's independence of thought, was then shot by a German firing squad for some minor breach of discipline. These tragedies, followed by the loss of the war and his arrest as a one-time party leader, had led to M.'s mental breakdown and his transfer from prison to a mental institution. After cure and release he stood trial and the denazification court failed to prove that he had ever had anyone arrested or even been able to use his party ties to get a better railroad job. Though free, he was long mentally disturbed. For years neighbors saw him wait every day for hours at the street car stop, scanning each group leaving the car in hopes of finding his dead sons.

Now 72, M. needs money and occupation. Still vigorous, he located a job as engineer on a construction project. In a city close to his former small-town domain he lives in a cheap apartment house, on apparent good terms with the American soldier families who share it.

Reacting to questions in a suspicious or paranoic fashion, he was frank once the guard was down. To him Nazism is something over and done with, except for the memories of the early days. On one evening with dusk descending around the single Victorian lamp, he and his wife evoked a pathetic nostalgia about the early days, when they recalled like missionaries their social work for the poor in the name of the party, collecting money, food and clothing for the unemployed. He could also describe his organizational work for the party in 1933 in a county where almost no one belonged before the national seizure of power. As he told it, he had cultivated peasant support by tact and moderation, particularly on the religious issue. What he thought was his popularity among his former flock was shown by his recent visit to a political meeting at which he had spoken briefly. (A neutral source at the same meeting reported it a disaster, that M. had always been heavy-handed if not cruel, even then thought mentally disturbed, more feared than respected and neither now.)

Of the other counties studied, the only other living Kreisleiter returned from prison to a legal practice, but otherwise a withdrawn life in a small town. Inaccessible to interview, he had no interest in raking over the ashes of the past. His position in the community is complicated by the fact that his was a rabid anti-semitic town, its inhumanity climaxed by the November 1938 burning of the synagogue. For this the town is ashamed, but note that Kreisleiter Sch. took full responsibility for the violence, serving in jail beyond the normal three years, this though the town considers him the scapegoat for the more radical underlings he could not restrain. That he manfully took responsibility for the town's sins brings him a grudging respect.

Mayors, or *Buergermeister,* have the legal opportunity to be active again in public life, but rarely does a mayor live down a "brown" past unless he resides in a community small enough for him to be known as a person and not as a Nazi. Politicians not personally known by the voters can only hope for complete anonymity, such as that enjoyed by ex-Mayor F. of one of Germany's largest cities.

By virtue of having been one of the very earliest party members, this mild yet fanatic clerk for the city had become its mayor with the national seizure of power. He remembers his term as mayor first for his decision regarding street car fares—he successfully urged a low fare and gambled on increased use despite the fears of his bureaucrats. He remembers as well his planning for a subway, a project for a while ridiculed, but mentioned again in a city with some of the worst traffic jams on the continent. He described long hours of party work to maintain the autonomy of local government with a colleague Goerdeler, the same later killed as the leader of the resisance movement. Although F. was high in party seniority, an associate of Hitler from 1922, and holder of high national offices, insiders consider him too unsocial, lacking the sharp elbows necessary to have competed in the real power struggle. He remains someone who would naturally be concerned about street car fares.

Though unimposing, slight and myopic, F. could still dazzle the interviewer with a remarkable memory for statistics; budgets of each year somehow survived despite years of auto-

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matic imprisonment, about which he made no complaint. His later trial found him guilty of no crime to continue the imprisonment. He lives comfortably in a suburban, lake-side home, as much the result of a re-marriage with a moderately wealthy widow as of his own part-time job in a son-in-law's firm.

Much too independent in his own mind and much too scorned by former colleagues, he leads a non-political existence, limited to family, job, and selected memories. A very rare person would recognize him in the city he "ruled" for 12 years, yet the past can haunt him. Recently, for reasons of sympathy, he asked whether it would be possible for him to attend the funeral of his democratic successor as mayor. It was suggested to him that he not show his sympathy. It would be embarrasing if the ex-Nazi mayor were seen at even so private a public event.

Different is the career of H., the mayor of a small town, who after being imprisoned by the Americans for 7 months was released when it was noted that his office of assistant mayor was not on the list for automatic arrest. Tried and found guilty of no crime, he was permitted after a time as common laborer to return to his legal practice and soon elected mayor, to which post he has been re-elected several times. Still young in appearance, polished, handsome, careful and intelligent, he has served the democratic state with as much or more enthusiasm than he served the Nazi. He was forced in 1933 to join a party organization to practice law, and he needed to work to support his family. Obviously his ambition, then as now, has pushed him into more conforming than necessary. Old friends, without doubting his loyalty now, note that he went farther in his private life to conform to Nazi party ideology than he needed to do, though there is no evidence that he abused his office then or since.

Mayor H. governs his town in a commendable fashion, combining the legal skills assumed in the German system with a personal charm and congeniality one would expect of an American politician. His qualities as politician are never more evident than when dealing with American officers. With a private memory of his imprisonment in American jails, he mixes smoothly and easily with Americans, making pleasant speeches in English, inviting them to feasts of sausages and beer and dancing with officers' wives to American jazz.

More successful under the democratic aegis than under the fascist, he has little reason to look back with nostalgia. Serving then under superiors who were clearly his inferior in training, the first a demagogue, charming but useless, and the successor a drill sergeant whose only qualification for the job was a willingness to drive his subordinates, and between these two a bitter party fight, H. never had it so good. The past for him is painful to recall. He is terribly embarrassed when his sons ask him how he could possibly have co-operated with the Nazis and "tolerated" their atrocities. Although he knows the human motives why he worked as mayor and why he fought as a soldier, he finds it impossible to explain to anyone who did not live in Germany 1933-1945.

Even more than mayors of small towns, village mayors have remarkable political longevity; large numbers of them were retained from the Weimar period by the Nazis, if for no other reason than that they were the only ones willing to accept the onerous job and the only ones the peasants would accept. Many, perhaps most of those, were returned to office in 1948 when self-government returned to West Germany and ex-politicians had returned from prison. This is more reflective of the conservatism of the villages than on any ideological agility of their mayors. Somewhat typical is Mayor Hub. of the village of W. in the hills of southern Bavaria on the rim of the Alps. Mayor before 1933, he was urged by his priest to stay on as Nazi mayor, to prevent a radical from getting the job. For his years as Roman Catholic and pseudo-Nazi mayor of his village 1933-1945, he was imprisoned for 18 months until his priest got him out of an American jail, even as the mayor had gotten the priest out of a Nazi jail. Almost immediately after his release, he was re-elected mayor over a competitor.

It would be difficult to analyse how Hub. has adjusted to the new regime, for in a real sense, he has remained mayor all of these years by not adjusting to the outside world. In his denazification trial the only evidence that he had ever been a Nazi was his party number.

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Commanders of urban police were much more political figures than rural mayors, for the term "police state" is nearly synonymous with totalitarianism. (The policeman's lot now is not a happy one; their image is bad.) Yet the police presidents were usually more than party hacks, frequently bureaucrats of the old school, rarely agitators of the new. During Weimar the police had almost as readily beaten up Nazis as Communists. (Gauleiter W. had little use for the police who had beaten his face bloody.) Of officials who stayed in Nazi offices the most fascinating was Police President Dr. M., who beautifully exemplifies the Kaiser-Conservative who worked with the party when necessary, worked against it when he thought necessary and possible, never really accepting its lower-class ideas or leaders of which he had experience with the most sordid sort.

Dr. M.'s family pride and graces were evident from the first interview, which like all that followed was accompanied by tasteful tea with rum, cakes and finally champagne. Such exquisite tastes were enabled by a good pension based on his many years of high state service, which office was adjudged by the pension authorities to have been the result of his ability and not primarily of party preference. The "good life" resulted as well from his second marriage to an enterprising police secretary. (After her release from nine months in prison to the Americans, who allegedly simply said on releasing her, "Mistake," she opened a dog-furnishings business, profitable in dog-parading Germany.)

Dr. M. graciously denies resentment about his own imprisonment or the subsequent five trials in which he was each time acquitted of any criminal action. He is bitterly amused by the mistaken arrest of the second wife, but only bitter about the American officer in 1945 who gloated to his first wife that her husband was dead, within hours after she had learned that their only son had been killed in the last days of the war. She died soon thereafter.

He claims never to have been a Nazi, despite a 1933 party card and the high S.S. rank which came to police officers. Former fellow-prisoners with better Nazi credentials agree that he never really believed. The records and they agree that he "served" the Party for the opportunities it offered him for income and power, and possibly to restrain party extremists. He risked his all to depose his mad Gauleiter and won. He had no compunction about denouncing his ex-colleagues as mad men and fools, with heaps of convincing evidence. For all of this genuine disgust with Nazi insanity, he is angered by the trials of war criminals still in process. The murderers, of course, should be punished, but officials like himself who merely passed on orders had no choice.

He feels ill at ease in the "anarchic and corrupt" Bonn regime, albeit granting that corruption was great under the Nazis as well. As a gentleman of the late Kaiser school, he rejects Nazism and party democracy for much the same reasons. Yet his rejection has no political significance. He lives virtually unknown in a different city. His only contact with the political world would be the occasional interviews for radio broadcast to retell how he protected Count Stauffenberg's family from death after the Count attempted the attentat on Hitler, July 20, 1944. Gracious teas with old friends may denounce the present over sips of champagne, but they have no plans to recreate the plebeian Nazi past which they detest.

Other than in his political passivity, a second police president, St., is a contrast in appearance and character, neither tall nor aristocratic, but dumpy and petit bourgeois, with no evidence of any independence of action as police president, and with no concern but to obtain a larger pension. Living simply with a daughter and her dentist husband, also in a town where he is unknown, he could see no reason why his pension was so low. The reason is simple: not

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a trained civil servant but an army officer marginally involved in the 1923 Putsch effort, he had been rewarded for that service and for being a former teacher of Heinrich Himmler. St. receives little sympathy from former colleagues who report that he used his police position primarily to chase deer and women; that he never was a party idealist is evident. His Gauleiter described him as a "good liver." This he can no longer be. The single political act for which he may be remembered would be his senseless execution of a German who had encouraged the surrender of a small town, one day before the American army took it without opposition.

A third police president from an ancient noble family and commander of police in a great German city was unavailable for comment. He lives completely withdrawn from the world in a remote area and reportedly in abject poverty, bitter and in poor health. His only hope is the higher pension.

Observations:

Generalizations about these once "great" and now fallen figures are difficult to make. A few leaders, usually the younger, have well adjusted to the new order and serve it as gladly as they served the old, perhaps more because it has served them longer and without a war. (Successful men then are usually successful now.) Their views of the past are mostly colored by the Nazi war, by their American imprisonment which all consider unjustified, except perhaps Gauleiter W. who accepts responsibility and shows remorse. Those who were young then have had the chance to assimilate into the new Germany, but anyone important then is likely too old now; rare is the Nazi who was not a veteran of the First World War, and necessarily in his early seventies. (Even permitted to parade they would be a rather tottery lot.) Their age, failure and tarnished past, isolate them from the new Germany about them, but the general indifference to their "plight" isolates them further. Had the young Germany continued to share the 1945-1948 poverty and powerlessness which is their leaders' punishment, old leaders might have found young followers. As it is, being labeled an ex-Nazi is for politics and state service in large communities, a kiss of death. An ex-Nazi city councilman, with the cleanest of records during and after his prison service, running for mayor of a large town, had jeers drown out his forthright and candid admission that he was ashamed of having joined the party as a young lawyer in 1933. He naturally lost the election by a wide margin.

In their isolation born of indifference and prosperity, and widespread horror at Nazi atrocities, the Nazis have little mass appeal to which they can ever appeal. Politicians, younger and politically cleaner, could hope for a swing to the right by appeal to patriotism, the half-expressed thought that the Nazis were scoundrels but they were *our* scoundrels; the Nazi past was *our* past; *we* can't be that bad. "The Russians raped East Europe and the Americans bombed women and children." The only area where the thought has found some public expression has been among the veterans about why the war was fought and how it was fought. Veterans refuse usually to admit that the German army fought unfairly or fought entirely without reason. It is most bitter for Germans to recall, whether Nazi or not, that the millions of soldiers who died for their country—or Hitler—are ignored, not praised for their deaths, which were as total as the deaths of the victorious soldiers. It is nearly impossible to accept the fact that one's country is solely to blame for so evil a war, although the supporting evidence marshalled by even German professors is nearly as convincing as one could ever hope to assemble for any historical event. Nor is it easy for a member of the resistance to Hitler to speak of his sabotage against Hitler in the presence of a veteran of the Russian front, who could consider this sabotage to blame for the deaths of his comrades. World War II is the major "unconquered area" of the German past.

Yet the war was clearly lost and was just as clearly unmitigated disaster to all. The ruins are gone but not forgotten. Millions of Jews were senselessly killed—the most unrepentant can only quibble about the number of millions killed—and for this Germany is shamed forever. The young resent this shame so bitterly that to link this new generation to the sins of the old by an open Nazi revival is nearly impossible. Nationalism may well revive but not "Nazism."

Denying political ambitions which are illusionary for the foreseeable future, their *only* future as old men, the ex-Nazis have but one hope, to redeem their personal reputations as idealists who were not personally to blame for the fiasco. A minority are concerned with redeeming the reputation of the party and even the Fuehrer. They are the more to be pitied for their madness.

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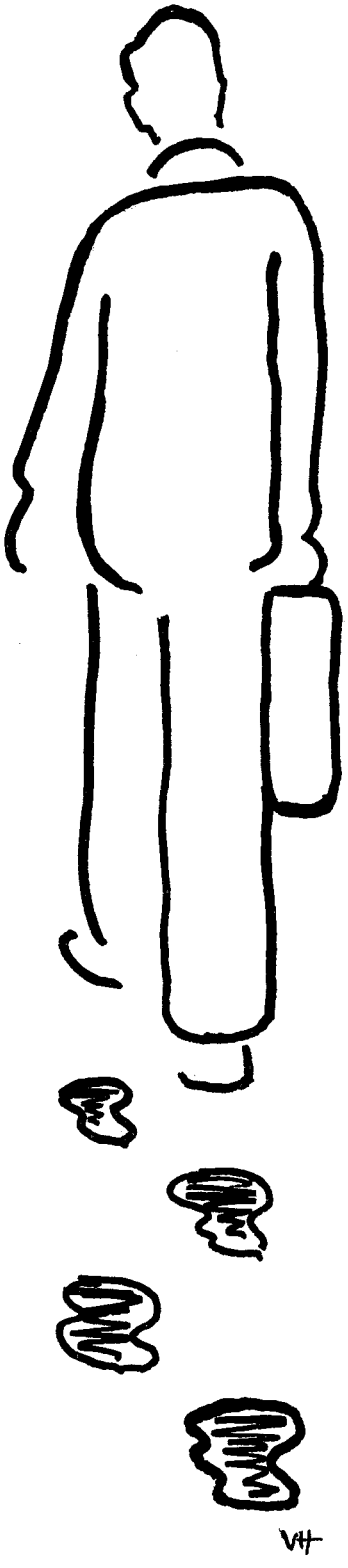
Under Those Bermuda Palms

Robert Alexander



With each sudden jolt of the taxi Sam Barlin was reminded of just how miserably his head was clogged by the virus infection. But, except for those instants of sharp reality, his mind was elsewhere as the cab sped from Burbank Airport to his home in North Hollywood. There — and the thought soothed him immensely — would be Charlotte waiting for him. The kids also, of course, but mainly Charlotte.

Were the gifts ok? The beauty parlor set for Denny defied objection; but what about the drum for Mike? If it didn't drive Charlotte mad, how would the neighbors react? Well, it's part of growing up. Mike'll have to learn not to pester people with it if he wants to keep the drum.

A heavy flutter came from Sam's throat as he sighed over Charlotte's gift. Gee, I hope she likes it. In a long green box tied with off-white silk ribbon was a silver choker of striking modern inspiration and a matching bracelet with swiss-cheese holes cut out of the shiny wide shank. Seventy-five bucks, he thought with satisfaction. Those are the *real* traveling expenses.

A smile brightened his illness-weary countenance. Wait till Paul Gordon sees those dill pickles from Maury's. Imagine, a guy insisting there isn't a decent dill pickle on the whole West Coast. The grass is always greener . . . maybe it should be the pickles are always greener on the other side of the country. OK, Paul buddy, we'll try out a whole jar together and see.

Charlotte is probably still worried about Denny and her arm. Funny how kids are. You're home to meet an emergency for months on end and nothing happens. Then the day after you're on a trip, bang, the kid can't lift her left arm.

Says she can't, anyway. Jesus, that phone call. More traveling expenses. A half-hour anyway. "Charlotte, please calm yourself. Maybe it's a game or something . . . Of course I realize you're worried. So am *I* . . . Yes, maybe even

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Denny, too; though to be brutally frank, I think she's laughing up her sleeve . . . No, I'm *not* a brute, for Christ's sake. Anything I say won't make things better or worse. But just maybe, you know, she's putting on an act . . . I only said 'just *may*be.' It doesn't hurt to say something . . . *That,* I admit, hurts. I'll thank you to — . . ." Sam capped the mouthpiece with his palm and nodded in exasperation at his cousin sitting opposite him on the other bed. "If I want, she'll never speak to me again. A blessing, maybe?"

Then back into the phone. "Look, Charlotte, will you listen to me for a minute? . . . Christ, I didn't say that . . . I *know* you listen to me a lot. And I listen to you. That's marriage; that's making decisions together . . . OK, Charlotte, let me start again. Can I make a suggestion? . . . OK, fine. Call up Doctor Perlman; tell him what you've told me and see what he says, ok? . . . Why not? . . . What has *that* got to do with it? . . . Well, I like him *and* his jokes. And particularly, since this is what we're supposed to be talking about at a dollar a minute, I like the way he handles sick children . . . Yes, I know; maybe she isn't sick. But how can it hurt just talking to him about it? . . . OK, don't call him. But do me this favor, please, Charlotte. Call Paul and have *him* call Doctor Perlman . . . Now what? . . . What do you think? Paul's not going to publish it in the newspaper, for God's sake . . . Well *I* never thought Marilyn was at all like that. She'll probably come right over and stay with you if you know Marilyn . . . Really, honey, I *don't* know her any better than you do. It's just an expression . . . You know I do, sweetheart. I found something really beautiful for you, dear . . . Don't worry; I won't tell you. We'll leave it for a big surprise Sunday . . . I can't, honey. I've got to work up to five o'clock Friday . . . How can I? I haven't seen your folks yet. I'll have to do that Saturday. They've already invited me for dinner . . . No, dear; they're your parents, after all, and I don't believe they'd like it if I did that . . . Well, there's an 11 am plane that brings me in Sunday night . . . I just don't know if there's anything earlier, but truthfully — I didn't want to tell you this and add to your worries — but there's a bug around Brooklyn and I think it's got me. Anyway, I'm sniffling a little — food tasteless and all — so I thought if I got three good nights' sleep, I'd shake it off. *That's* why I decided not to take the coach flight over Saturday night. I thought about it, you know I did . . . *Yes,* I want to be with you and Denny, kitten; but like I say, Denny may be perfectly all right . . . No, I'm not calling her a liar; how many times must I tell you, Charlotte? . . . I'm sorry, dear . . . Don't get upset now . . . All right; we'll see." The conversation lasted another seven minutes. Charlotte broke into tears twice more, and finally Sam promised to get on the coach flight and arrive Sunday morning.

Sam called Charlotte again from her folks' home Saturday night. Since she still seemed upset, he did not mention his growing cold and reassured her it was not necessary to meet him at the airport. He tried a roundabout route to inquire about Denny in order not to upset Charlotte's parents. "That arm of the tree — you know, dear — the one on the left, did you ever get it raised?"

Charlotte did not respond at all properly. "Whatever are you talking about, Sam?" she asked sharply. "In the first place, trees have *boughs,* not arms; second, we haven't a tree worthy of the name; and third, what the hell are you talking about, anyway, nature boy . . . raising *what* bough? Fourth, these calls are expensive so save your riddles for the breakfast table where the kids can enjoy them, too." Sam let it go. He figured if anything serious were wrong with Denny, Charlotte would have told him.

As the cab threaded through the hills approaching his home, Sam sneezed violently and prayed that whatever Charlotte had done, she hadn't fixed things with Doctor Perlman so *he* couldn't get some treatment. The cab driver did not think to turn into the driveway so that Sam would only have the flagstone path to walk to his door. Rather than sit impatiently in the maneuvering cab, Sam decided to get out at the curb.

He had to hop from the edge of one puddle to another to reach the driveway. Yellow silt was spread like a fan where his yard sloped into the pavement. Momentarily, Sam was absorbed by the delicate design made by black dirt against the silt. Smog from the refineries, he decided, disturbing one pattern with his toe to learn that the black particles were only on top. Looking up at the house, he saw Charlotte watching him from the window. Sam picked up his bag and fairly ran to the door. When it did not open for him, he set down his bag again, found his key, put it in the lock and — in an instant — was home again.

Charlotte stood across the living room with her right hand resting picturesquely on the fire-

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place mantel. She was taller than Sam and of imposing, athletic build. Her blond hair fell smoothly into a bob. Her features bespoke vitality which took on the aspect of pluck from a trace of weakness around her mouth.

Sam looked solid, with thin dark hair under the pepper-and-salt cap he had taken to wearing. His face was playful, sometimes with a sad determination to see the humor in otherwise disturbing events. He had been called "roly-poly" by Paul Gordon's wife, loving all the connotations intended or not.

"*Hel*lo, honey," he said while hastily wiping his feet on the outside mat. He deposited the bag inside and closed the door behind him. Charlotte, meanwhile, approached Sam with measured steps, bringing her hand forward from the mantel to sketch a welcome. As Sam started eagerly toward her, she stopped and her arm fell.

"What the hell are you tracking all that mud across the carpet for?" she snapped. Sam caught himself in midstride and looked at his shoes. It was true. Caramelly silt clung to the edges. Behind him the four steps he had taken across the room were recorded with terrifying exactness.

"Aw gee, honey," Sam protested in a phlegm-choked voice. "I haven't seen you for two weeks. Don't let's have anything nasty, not the very first thing, please. I'm sorry." He did not move.

"All right, Sam," Charlotte said quietly through cherry lips. "Welcome home." She stood for fully ten seconds, poised and lovely in a tan knit dress. "But *real*ly, Sam," she continued with a faint echo of annoyance, "look at the filth from the suitcase. I mean it's hard enough with the kids, keeping the place clean in this lousy weather without following after you like a streetcleaner behind a circus parade."

"You do have Laura," Sam pointed out. He was having difficulty holding his balance.

"Sh! Laura's in today," Charlotte whispered. "Her boy friend got involved with another woman and now can't get away for a few days. At least I think that's what she was trying to tell me last night." The conversation lapsed again. "Sam, you're *sniff*ling," Charlotte announced. "I thought you said you were going to take care of yourself in New York."

"I told you I planned to," Sam explained somewhat impatiently. "But you wanted me home early, remember? Anyway, I couldn't sleep on the plane, as usual, and it was drafty . . . altogether a miserable trip. So all the way home in the cab I look forward to coming into my warm house, kissing my warm wife, et cetera. And here I am, afraid to move for fear you'll shout at me. All I want is to say hello to you as a husband should."

Charlotte raised her eyebrows playfully and started toward him again. "Well," she said teasingly, "since you've such a *bad* cold, I'll have to be careful, on account of the children." As Charlotte drew close to Sam she advanced an admonishing finger to his chin to guide his mouth away from her lips, which she planted affectionately on his cheek. With her free hand she pressed his shoulder strongly to her breast.

"Let's forget this rotten beginning," Charlotte offered, moving away toward the kitchen. "I'll get the whisk broom and dust pan. You just back up to the door in your tracks — I just had the rug cleaned, you know — and brush off your shoes and the bag on the porch. *Then* come in," she added grandly, "and we'll start all over again."

That was that, Sam thought. Charlotte returned with the implements. As she knelt to her task, Sam asked about Denny. "I've been worried," he said superfluously.

"Please, Sam. I don't want to talk about it," Charlotte said vehemently. She looked so helpless to him, on her knees, peering up at him through eyes widened to meet his. It occurred to him again — as it had often at the beach or when she climbed a ladder or took groceries from the trunk of the car — that she never affected that mincing delicacy so common among her sex. For a big woman, she had grace and coordination to spare.

"Well, at least tell me if she's all right. I'm her father, you know."

"She's all right," Charlotte said, back at work.

"Where is she now?"

"In her room, reading or sleeping or something."

"Did you call Doctor Perlman like I asked?"

"Sam, I *told* you I didn't want to talk about it," Charlotte said, rising to her feet. "And I mean it. I've already told you she's fine and happy in her room and not bleeding to death of leprosy, but that doesn't satisfy you. You want details. She's ok. I tell you. Now leave it at that and take off your shoes."

Sam left his shoes on the inside mat to dry. "Well, she's my daughter," he said in a hurt voice.

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"She's mine too, remember," Charlotte retorted. "Do you think I'll assassinate her if you don't keep checking on me?"

In his stocking feet Sam had to look up to address Charlotte. "Where's Mike?" he asked.

"With the junior Cubs," she said casually. "He left early, before I got up. Laura packed him a lunch."

"Was it important?"

"How the hell do I know . . . Was *what* important?"

"This scout meeting," he continued patiently.

"Important to him," Charlotte answered lightly. "Why?"

"I like to see my son when I return from a long trip, that's all."

"You'll get over that feeling quick," Charlotte commented as she bent to clean the brass knobs on the bottom of his suitcase. Then, with a heave, she pulled the bag up to rest on her thigh. Slanting away from it, she moved unevenly toward their bedroom.

"Here, let me do that," Sam called huskily. "That's heavy, darling."

"No," she called back in a strained voice. "It's not that heavy. You're sick and I don't want you getting worse. Let's have a little health around here, for God's sake."

Passing the dining room as he moved after her, Sam felt his attention being tugged by something unfamiliar. He turned to see a new dining room set of clean Scandinavian design. "Jesus Mary Mother of God," he cried out in a voice that cracked in disbelief.

Charlotte quickly came out of the bedroom. "Sh!" she hissed, adding a silencing hand gesture. "I *told* you Laura is in today."

"But, my God," Sam sputtered. "What's all this for?"

"To eat from, ninnie," she answered with scorn.

"But what was wrong with the old set? And it wasn't so old either," he recalled. "We bought it less than a year ago."

"I couldn't stand it," Charlotte said. "If you must know the truth, it took my appetite away. I lost four pounds in the last three weeks eating from that damn counter."

"Counter?" Sam repeated in disbelief. "The Goddamn set was custom *made* for you. The guy who made it — I never told you this — thought your ideas were nuts. He called me up special. He didn't even want to make it. Finally, he said ok if he didn't have to put his name on it. Imagine. A year later you can't stand it."

"No wonder that wop wouldn't put his name on it." Charlotte was enraged. "So he could do a lousy job." Sam sneezed. "He did it just to prove he was right." She exploded into tears. "And you let him. That's why I've hated it all these months. I'm *glad* I got rid of it. What a lousy trick you played on me."

"Me?" Sam protested. "What did I do except let you have your crazy way, and pay the bill?"

"You let him ruin it, so shut up," she said between sobs.

"I gave it to Marilyn and Paul," Charlotte said, calm again, "just till they get their own. They're moving, you know, to an unfurnished place."

"Yes," Sam replied wearily. "And I also know, Miss Herman Miller, that Paul can't stand that set. And since when does Marilyn have an idea that wasn't first Paul's? So there you are. Now everybody's unhappy."

Charlotte's tone was mellow now. "Are you unhappy, Sambo?" She placed her hands gently on his shoulders.

"Well," he answered, pacified, "it's just that I'd like to be consulted before you remake the house. You know," he added, "you're not the only one that has to eat from that table. Maybe it'll take away *my* appetite."

"Really, Sam, you're so contrary," Charlotte said gaily. "Look at the set, please. Isn't it just lovely? Now sit down in the chair . . . no, at the head . . . Now tell me."

"It is handsome," Sam conceded, running his hand over the seamless joining of a dark and light panel. "That's craftsmanship," he said in humble amazement. "How much did it cost?" he asked, rising.

"$917."

"My God," was all Sam could get out.

"You wouldn't want orange crates, would you?" Charlotte asked mockingly. "You get only what you pay for. That's what you always tell your customers."

"But where'd you get the . . ." He sneezed. ". . . the money?"

"Gesundheit. I put ninety-two down — mostly from the clothes money my folks sent — and each month I'll put my clothes money check toward it." She calculated busily on her fingers. "Only $55 a month."

"Yeah, but for how many months?"

"Eighteen, that's all." Then Charlotte's tone shifted. "Oh, Sam. A minute ago you said you liked it. I can call them up — Morgan's . . . they're open today — and have it taken back if that's what you want."

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"It's not that I don't like it," Sam temporized. "I meant it sincerely . . . liking it, that is. But the sudden expense. We didn't plan on it. It's an extra bill each month, you know."

"I can call them right now," she insisted.

"No," Sam said wearily, "what's done is done." After considering for several seconds what he meant by those words, Sam regarded Charlotte warmly. "Do you really like it, kitten?"

"Of course, Sam . Didn't I give up my clothes for it?"

"Well, I like it too," he continued expansively. "So let's enjoy it . . . There, darling," and Sam kissed his wife on the cheek.

"I'm so glad you like it, Sam," she said as they walked together to the bedroom. She brought his slippers from the closet and kneeled to put them on his feet. "Mind your cold, now, Sam," she said.

Sam opened the suitcase on his bed. "It'll just be a jiffy till I get this stuff away," he said. "Maybe we'll drop by Paul and Marilyn's later and see how they like their new furniture."

"It's in storage for the time being," she said.

"Anyway," he continued cheerily, "you know how Paul always says there's not a decent dill pickle in the West, that the pickles are greener on the other side of the country; well, he said there's none better than at Maury's in Brooklyn, so I brought him a jar from there."

"Really?" Charlotte commented with as little interest as possible.

"Yeah, so I thought we'd drop by and have a little fun over it."

"We'll see," she said in the choked tone that television has made the badge of misunderstood women.

"What's wrong, honey?" Sam asked gravely. Privately he was immensely pleased with his quick insight. "I'll bet you had other plans, that's what."

"Oh, *no,* Sam," she said with heavy irony. "But if your idea of how to spend your first day home in two weeks is to eat dill pickles with Paul Gordon, then I'd say you need psychoanalysis, at least."

Jesus, what brought that on, Sam wondered as he unpacked. Charlotte fell to helping with the laundry and clean linen. Moving toward his closet with two suits, Sam asked: "Aren't you interested in your folks, even? I was with them less than 18 hours ago, you know."

"Didn't you get enough dill pickles there to satisfy you for a while?" she asked obstinately.

Sam stood before his closet. "Where's the grey suit with the thin stripe, Charlotte?" he asked.

"Single or double breasted?"

"I've only got one grey suit with a thin white stripe," he said fretfully. "It's double breasted. Is it at the cleaners?"

"Why didn't you say 'white stripe' the first time?" she replied coolly.

"Because I didn't have to," he explained with little patience, "because I've only got one grey suit with *any* kind of a stripe . . . And where's the cashmere sportcoat, the brown one? Just tell me. Are they at the cleaners?"

"No," she answered in a slack voice.

"Then where the hell are they, for God's sake?" Sam's thick voice, rising now, sounded as if it were tearing his throat. Charlotte neither moved nor spoke. "We're gabbing around here in circles," Sam went on, annoyed and bewildered. "Without getting too technical, tell me where the hell are my clothes."

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"I gave your old clothes away," Charlotte said quietly but with defiance in her eyes.

"*Old* clothes . . .?" Sam began but Charlotte cut in.

"While you were in New York eating dill pickles there were people out here in California drowning and having their homes washed away in terrible floods. Did you know that, Sam?" Her tone was as thin as a knife blade. "We've always had more than these people, and suddenly they have even less than before. Do you begrudge them some old clothes? Well, I don't. I gave *mine* willingly . . ."

"For Christ's sake, stop," Sam shouted over her voice.

"Remember," Charlotte said calmly, "Laura is listening."

"What the hell do I care about Laura?" Sam replied in a voice that reinforced his unconcern about the maid. "*I* care about those clothes. They weren't just old clothes . . . and you *knew* that, Charlotte. That grey striped suit was a favorite of mine . . ."

"You'd had that wretched nigger costume for three years," Charlotte broke in quietly, ever mindful of Laura.

"This was only the third year beginning," Sam said. "And besides, I liked it. In fact, aside from you, everyone liked it."

"You say *you* care about your clothes as if I didn't at all," Charlotte said in an injured tone. "Well, I do — and more than about my own, as the facts show, Sam. Not only did I give up some of *my* clothes to the flood victims, but I gave them up in the future too so we could have a decent dining room set." Sam rummaged through his closet frantically while Charlotte spoke. "But more than I care about *any*one's clothes," she went on, "I care about those people cold, homeless, and shoeless up north."

With sinking heart Sam looked to the closet floor. "My God," he exclaimed with genuine surprise, "my cordovans! I hadn't worn them a half dozen times."

"*That* was a mistake, I admit it," Charlotte said bravely. "I admit it."

"Jesus, Charlotte." Sam's tone was reduced to perplexity. "What got into you?"

Charlotte was fighting back tears. "Let's calm down for a minute, Sam," she pleaded. "Here, sit down," she added, guiding him into the aisle between their beds. They sat opposite one another with their knees almost touching. "Fine," she said in a voice so controlled it was terrifying. "Now tell me you love me . . . tell me, tell me, Sam."

"Yes, I love you, darling," Sam admitted, half rising from the bed to deliver a kiss. Charlotte demurely drew her lips just out of range. "The children," she said throatily as his lips found her chin, "remember, Sam."

He settled back again, aroused but wary. There was a silence while Charlotte fixed softened eyes on her husband. "You were about to say . . ." Sam started, but had to clear his throat.

"Yes. I was about to say," she resumed earnestly, "that I got sick — really, helplessly sick — when I read about those people in Marysville and in Yuba City. I thought about our selfish life — it is, you know; never giving money to beggars or anything — and I was ashamed for both of us. Here we are. Every time we refuse a beggar, we're just saving up for some extra comfort or pleasure to add to the luxury we

THE SERVICE

Like old New Englanders we waded
through inclement weather, broke black stalks
of dead fields, weeds and small flowers crushed
to bitter perfume tearing the eyes,
and sat for timeless hours, nor nodded,
nor shifted sitting, being like bricks
except in hearing the words unleashed—
overwhelming—like hounds on their preys.

The words, spoken, took on touch, became
texture and a blunt physical force;—
we were white, shaking, in this presence
of love and heaven. Outside stiff rain
bruised stones black and blue, punished the stream,
made the leaves limp; noisy rain made fierce
hymns which hung soundless on each sense
of ours; rain fell in rhythm, in line.

And returning home, our speaking choked.
We were torn, walking in rough furrows,
by new need, nor was our thirst quenched
by that rain however hard it fell.
So we sat on hard chairs, nothing cooked,
noon meal forgotten. And no one prays,
being beyond prayer. Here we are bunched
like startled oxen, lightning and hail
pelting out of a placid sky; pain
is joy strangely; and between, no line.

Margaret Carlson

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have already. Do you understand?" she pleaded. Sam nodded.

"Then I saw those pictures — did you see them in New York? — and I realized these were people with needs . . . suddenly . . . now. It was an e*mer*gency, Sam."

"About those beggars," Sam said in a subdued tone, awed by a side of his wife that was new to him, "most of them have just come out of one bar and are on their way to another. Those stories they tell . . ."

"Oh, I've heard you say that so often I could vomit right now," she interrupted bitterly. "The same la-de-da, but there's no more to prove your version of it than theirs. So why don't you believe one, once in a while? Even if he's cheating you, you're still a hundred times better off than he is." Charlotte dropped her urgent tone. "Anyway, I'd like it if you gave them money. There's something phony about thinking everybody's a conniver except you."

Sam raised his shoulders in a gesture of futility, but Charlotte's extended palm relieved him of having to formulate something to say. "No, let me finish, Sam. I've given this a lot of thought. It was about those pictures." She was lost momentarily. "Oh, yes. It was an emergency. And when we turn away from people in an emergency, it's only because some day — at our leisure, don't you see — we'll want some little pleasure for ourselves. If I'd hesitated for a minute, I know the whole idea would have been eaten up by thoughts of the kids, of you and, yes, myself. So I just called the Red Cross and then went around picking the clothes."

"Honey," Sam interrupted politely, "I admire what you did, honestly. You found some castoff clothing piled up in the basement and decided to give them away on the spot. Fine. But how did my good clothes, from this closet, get into the package?"

"I was just coming to that," Charlotte said defensively. "But just a minute. 'Good clothes?' Those are your words, not mine. Obviously, in my opinion, they weren't so good, if you'll excuse me for saying it . . . Anyway, while the woman was driving over to pick the clothes up, I realized that none of yours were in the basement. I think we sold them all to the fellow that kept the lawn last year."

"*You* sold them, Charlotte," Sam reminded her evenly.

"You never objected, and furthermore you took the money," Charlotte parried. "Anyway, it's not up to the wife to set the moral tone of a house."

Sam escaped his confusion by trying, without success, to breathe through his clogged nose. "So," Charlotte went on, "I went into our closets and picked out a few more things of mine and did the same with yours. And believe it or not, I was afraid then maybe I'd make a mistake." She hesitated. "I almost didn't do it. But then I thought — please listen to me, Sam — I thought, what's a marriage about, anyway, if people can't learn to act for one another once in a while. Honestly, as I picked out those clothes of yours, I felt I was taking an important step in our marriage."

Her voice was proud, now. "So I had everything ready for the woman when she came from the Red Cross. I had picked out the old clothes, the unattractive, out-of-style clothes — at least in my judgment — something to keep those unlucky people warm." After a pause, she continued in a voice she could no longer control: "And if you don't like it, we're just about through," and gave way to tears.

Sam sat quietly for a minute while Charlotte continued crying. When she looked up sideways at him, from her cupped hands, with an almost quizzical eye, he spoke strongly: "No, I don't *like* it." The shouting made his congested head dizzy with pain. The suffering gave him confidence, as if it paid on the spot for his anger. "Why the hell should I? If we're not to wallow in luxury while other people are hungry, why can't you give up a new dining room set every year?"

"I bought that before the flood, you brute," she said in triumph. "Besides, I gave up my new clothes for it."

"Your future new clothes, remember that," Sam roared. "And if I've learned anything about you these seven years, it's that somehow you'll get those clothes anyway. Some argument will come up and you'll troop to Beverly Hills on a shopping binge."

"You're just looking for ways to insult me," Charlotte raged back. "Already you're blaming me for things I haven't even had a chance to do. That shows there's nothing you really can put your finger on."

"Like hell there isn't," Sam retorted, stumbling to the closet again. "This brown checked suit," he shouted, brandishing it wildly, "this one *is* out of style. We've agreed to that many times, and I haven't worn it for over a year. Why didn't you pick this one instead of one you knew I liked?"

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Charlotte was crying again. "It's just a matter of judgment," she said between sobs. "I tried to do right, to pick the right things . . . I almost gave up the whole idea, I was so afraid . . . afraid of *this*," her voice rising for a moment, then subsiding. "I almost wish I had. Not because I think I did wrong, but to save myself from the humiliation of your savage rantings."

"Can't you ever admit you made a mistake?" Sam asked calmly.

"Can't you ever think I do anything right?"

"Well, your score while I was away is pretty low."

"That's just the point," Charlotte said, composing herself. "Seven years married to you, and I'm still afraid to move an ashtray for fear you'll scream at me." Sam shrank visibly, in shame for his shouting. "I'm like a bird in a gilded cage," Charlotte continued. "I won't have any judgment left if you won't let me use it once in a while. So maybe I make a few mistakes. That's how you learn, for God's sake."

Sam turned back to his closet. "And that's another thing," she complained. "You can't drop a thing. You'll be harping at me about the clothes every time something goes wrong . . . at the store, on the golf course. Then *I'll* get the brunt of it."

"You don't leave me much humanity," Sam pointed out with tentative humor.

"Exactly," Charlotte came back mercilessly. "I said brute before and I mean it now. Brute! You're away for two weeks on your own, leaving me with all the burdens and decisions. And of all the things I had to do, a couple aren't done just the way you like it, so you come in the house raving, and you've been raving ever since."

"Just one question," Sam interrupted with puzzlement. "I could have had a decent night's sleep last night and maybe shaken this bug. Why in hell did you beg me to aggravate myself and take the damned coach?" He was shouting again. "So you could have a full day to scream at me?" His head seemed about to explode.

"No, you ape," she shouted back, "so we could go to the Bermuda Palms."

"The Bermuda Palms?" he whispered incredulously. "What the hell for?"

She looked at him coolly. "For sex, nitwit." Sam was struck dumb, so she added: "What the hell do we ever go there for?"

"The Bermuda Palms?" he repeated.

"Come on, now that you brought it up. Let's get going," Charlotte urged.

"Are you out of your mind?" Sam asked almost humbly. "After all this, the Bermuda Palms?"

"Listen," she explained matter-of-factly. "I've had a rotten two weeks, and enough of this day has been spoiled already. I was afraid of something like this, and I vowed that no matter what happened this morning, we were going to the Bermuda Palms."

Sam was silent for several seconds. "Why not here, Charlotte?" he speculated. "I don't want to start the argument all over again, but any way you look at it, we're out more than a thousand dollars since I left, not counting those phone calls. Couldn't we start economizing a little? It's twenty bucks at least at the Bermuda Palms."

"I already have a reservation," she said.

"Besides, I'm sick of hotel rooms. For two weeks — honest, honey — I've been looking forward to going to bed here . . . with you. Don't ask me to pack up again to stay at a hotel only twenty miles from home." At this point a coughing fit of frightening proportions overwhelmed him. When it was over he approached Charlotte, pointing a shaking finger at his enflamed face. "Look at me, honey. I'm sick! I don't want to go outside until . . ."

Sam's whining provoked Charlotte to interrupt. "How can we stay home with Laura here?" she asked through clenched teeth. "In this cheesebox we might as well invite her into the bedroom with us."

"Damn Laura," Sam said in frustration. "Send her out."

"Life's bad enough for her these days as it is," Charlotte declared. "*I'm* not going to make it any worse."

Wearily Sam sat down again opposite her. "Well, what about the Bartholomew?" he offered. "It's lots closer and we'll probably get by for nine or ten bucks."

"Not on your life," Charlotte said with a laugh. "The last time we tried one of your cheapies and got such a fisheye I almost walked out. 'Just that one cosmetic case, madam, for both you and your . . . uh . . . husband?' Never again that humiliation. They know us at the Bermuda Palms. You've always liked it there."

Sam was nodding in assent. "OK, ok. The Bermuda Palms . . . While you're getting things together, I'll look in on Denny."

"Sam, we've wasted enough time already. Save it till later. Everything is ready," she said, "here," reaching for a small bag under the night table. "Just transfer your toilet kit from the

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suitcase," she said as she opened the bag on the bed. "I'll get your loafers from the closet."

Sam obeyed mechanically. As he removed the toilet kit, he said, "Here're the kids' gifts."

"They'll keep."

"Uh-huh," he agreed. Then, holding up a long green box, "And here's yours," he added.

"Here," she said, taking the box. "Thanks," and continuing the same arm movement deposited it in the overnight bag.

"Here're those pickles for Paul," Sam persisted, still looking in his suitcase. "We pass near his place."

"OK," Charlotte agreed. "Maybe we'll have supper with them. Now give me the jar and toilet kit." She put them in and closed her bag. "Let's go," she said brightly, handing it to Sam.

"Don't we have to tell Laura?" Sam inquired.

"She knows," Charlotte replied. "Let's get going."

It was turning sunny. Long dry streaks had appeared on the streets. "Let's put the top down," Charlotte suggested cheerily.

"I don't know, dear," Sam temporized. "This bug, you know."

"Christ, Sam, we only live once," she said with spirit. "This is the first decent day we've had since you left, honest."

So the top went down. And it became glorious as they drove. Just the barest ocean haze filtered the sun as in a cathedral. The sky was painted a heavy blue, against which tall palms swayed like pendulums of eternity . After ten miles through suburbs they were driving along the ocean. The sand sloped whitely to the lazy surf, and the warm sun now definitely prevailed over the cool air from the ocean.

Out of a thick grove of palms suddenly flashed a concentration of white light that made Sam blink. On approach, the furious whiteness spread and resolved itself into a low stucco building with clean modern lines worked into a Spanish motif. Exotic shrubs and flowers grew in masses along the wall.

"There it is," Charlotte announced gaily.

"I see it," Sam said. "Such a brilliant white . . . and those gorgeous flowers. It's really a beautiful place. I've seen it maybe a couple of dozen times, but it always strikes me that way, like it's the first time." He turned easily into the gravel driveway, and the car disappeared under the archway, across which a sign read: "The Bermuda Palms — California's Las Vegas."

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Notebook from Ischia & Three Snapshots from Ponza

Charles Wright

We have come back to Ischia for two weeks for the sunshine, for the quiet, and, perhaps, for some work . . . Epomeo, the volcano which shapes the island, seems cut upon the sky, each terrace, each ravine burned deeply into its place. There is a cloud caught on its peak; there are no smudges; there are no false lines. The light here is similar to the light in Greece, sharp, as if after a heavy rain.

* * * * * *

All morning the echoing reports of shotguns have fallen around us, for it is still the quail season on the island until the end of May. Now two men are hunting the vineyards below the house. They work along the vine rows here the way we used to work the corn rows for pheasant back in Iowa. The vines in the south of Italy are not allowed to grow in small bushes, each separate from the other. Rather, each vine is staked and then down the length of the row a long wooden pole is attached to each stake. So that the vines are then forced to grow up the stakes and out along the poles, at season's end, when they have joined and matted, causing a solid wall of green. Like the rude rose arbors often found in the southern United

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States. The men worked on down the rows where the birds were taking cover. When the birds were kicked up—they all seemed to be singles—the shot ripped through the new leaves like quick chains.

* * * * * *

Sant'Angelo is a small village on the far side of the mountain, down at the sea. We rode the bus there this afternoon after five o'clock. The village itself is half-hidden back up under an outcropping of rock; an egg-shaped island offshore about five hundred yards, joined to the mainland by a man-made causeway of dirt and stone fill. The houses are painted in ice-cream cone colors—pale pink and grey and white, with an occasional washed-out water-color blue. The village is given over completely to tourism, and there seems no other reason for its being there now. A magnificent, calm bay opens up to the left, facing south toward Capri and Sicily. It is very picturesque there, and very dead. Returning to Forio, our village, over the mountain, the sun was setting, an apricot floating on the full bowl of the sea. Sant' Angelo fell away behind us like so many pieces of colored paper snatched by the wind.

* * * * * *

Porto d'Ischia can be described as, perhaps, the capitol of the island. It is where all of the boats dock coming from the mainland. The town meshes with Ponte d'Ischia about halfway from the port to Castel San Angelo (not to be confused with the village of Sant'Angelo which is further around the island), an island fortress where Vittoria Colonna spent so many years after the death of her husband. Porto is completely tourist-oriented; Ponte is not. Fishing boats line the beaches, fishermen sit at the cafes, barefoot, trousers rolled up to just below the knee, blue cap on the back of the head. Or you see them coming home in the first darkening, carrying a fish by the tail for the evening meal. The village of Ponte d' Ischia is run-down and somewhat dirty, as a fishing village should be. There are great gaps of gardens and vineyards between the houses along the beach, an amazing show of self-preservation in an age when such land could easily sell for thousands of dollars.

* * * * * *

Ponte is an ocean-oriented town. Forio, however, although built right down next to the sea, is not. There one never smells the sea, or that salt, fishy odor which immediately calls to mind other harbors, other islands. Forio is agricultural, and the main piazza is up from the waterfront, in the center of the town. For the vineyards are the wealth of Forio, not the Mediterranean's poor supply of fish.

* * * * * *

There is a lovely story, told to me by my friend Nicola at noon today, of how the beautiful potted tropical plants came to Forio. It began years ago. The quail and wild pigeon that are hunted here on the island come from Africa, blown up on the winds which sweep out of the back of the desert, becoming the sirocco of the Mediterranean. One time, when he had shot and cleaned a mess of birds for the table, an islander decided to plant some of the undigested seeds which he found in the craw of one of the birds. Soon flowers began to grow in the small pots and window boxes he had used to plant the seeds, eventually becoming lush and full. The practice still goes on, each hunting season bringing more flowers. And who knows from what desert they come, from what jungle?

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THE ANCESTORS

We had a room which overlooked the village, which overlooked the bay. To the front was the village and the bay; to one side, and straight down, was the rest of the sea, green and shot all through with white threads like some rumpled piece of silk. The rocks were white in the sunlight and where the sea, compulsively, scrubbed its hands against them. On the bottom was the white sand. Inside our room, on the walls, their eyes looking for some long-ago-taken-away horizon, were the photographs of the ancestors. Fifteen I counted, not one, surely, taken less than fifty years before. The edges of the photographs had blurred into a sort of yellowness until only their faces, and their attitudes, were clear. The grandfathers and the great-grandfathers; the forgotten aunts and uncles; the cousins long dead in other lands. Yet they stayed on, watching the room, watching the house, watching me, someone they could never have dreamed of; they watched until the lights went out late at night, until the wind died down somewhere toward two o'clock in the morning. They watched all during our vacation.

THE WITCH ON THE ROOF OF THE WORLD

She moved like a person walking through golf balls. We could see her from where we usually came down the steps from the hill at the top of the town. She would walk from one side of the roof to the other, shaking a large, round strainer in her hands, sifting something. We couldn't tell what it was, except that it was white and round and about the size of bird eggs, and that there were many to be sifted. She wore a long black dress which went up to her neck and down to her wrists, and she had on a black scarf, from up under which some strings of white fell away. We could not see below her knees because of the railing which ran around the roof. She was stooped and walked very slowly. We got to calling her the Witch on the Roof of the World and she was there every afternoon, sifting those round white things, shuffling back and forth across the roof, every now and then looking querulously into the strainer before emptying it into, or onto, something we could never see because of the railing. The sun shone hard and hot every day and we used to wonder how she could stay up there on that white roof in those heavy clothes, sifting whatever it was she sifted. She was doing it every time we went by.

BACKSTREET

I saw him after it had happened. He was sitting down on the path with his head on his knees, moaning, the dark red wine he had just thrown up beginning to form a rivulet in the thick dust, working its way down the hill to where we stood on the back steps of the house. Then he began to cry, and the moaning became jerky and uncontrollable. Assunta, the maid, said:

"He is a *stupido,* an idiot, This happens every time he becomes drunk. They should never sell him wine. Probably someone bought it for him; a tourist. He cannot drink. Watch. It is like always."

He raised his head from his knees and looked down at the disappearing pool of red wine in front of him, toppled his head back and looked up for the sky, saying "Hail Mary full of Grace the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners at the hour of our death. Amen." All the while he was making the sign of the cross upon himself, first slowly then speeding it up. "His mother will come soon to get him," Assunta said. "Someone has already gone to tell her, for I saw them running up the hill. See. It is as I told you. It never changes. Watch. Every time it happens he thinks the wine is his blood. He thinks he is dying. Every time."
"Hail Mary full of Grace, the Lord is with thee . . ." Over and over.

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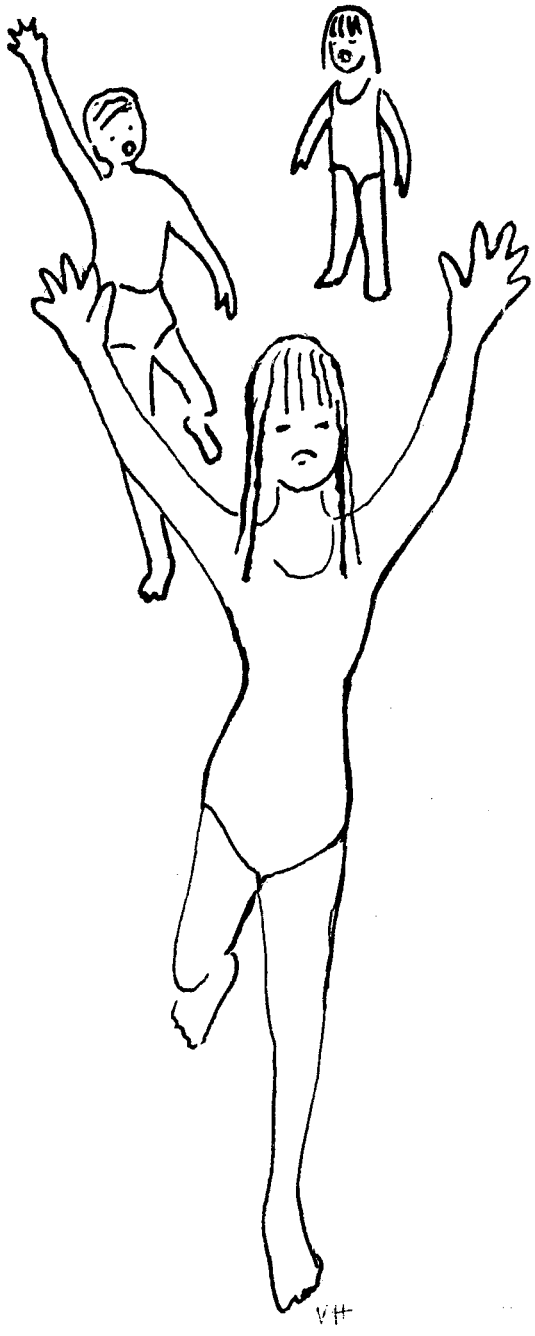
A DISTURBANCE

J. Carol Goodman

Allison Pitt came out of the barn which was her summer home wearing a pair of her husband's old shorts, a sweat shirt with high school letters written on it, and no shoes, She had started to run a comb through her dark red hair, but something had distracted her midway, and she had forgotten to finish.



She glanced over at her in-laws' house about sixty feet across the lawn. There in his usual place under the maple beside the kitchen garden was Claude Richardson, the twenty-two year old ministerial student. Three weeks ago he had come straight from Methodist Seminary in Ohio to be a supply preacher for the village church during his summer vacation.

Allison flopped on a weathered bamboo lounge. Then she got up again to readjust its position and pull a leg out of a hole between the stones on the terrace. She wanted to be able to see her three children while they played in the brook below. As they screamed with happiness she was trying to decide why that sound was not pleasing to her and why she was disturbed and fidgety. She let her head fall back on the lounge. She had the feeling she wanted to shut out that Claude Richardson.

Allison had had only a dozen words with him, yet there was something about him that annoyed her. Perhaps he was even the cause of her disturbance, although it was certainly not just because he was to be a minister, and she felt uncomfortable about being her casual sloppy self before him. After all she had been raised in a minister's family, so why wouldn't he seem natural to her?

Up until the time when her in-laws invited him to stay at their house she had been so happy. She had always been happy in Vermont and couldn't wait to pile the kids in the station wagon when school let out for the summer vacation. In fact the barn had been her oasis ever since the Pitt seniors had given it to her and her husband Bill to fix up.

As she lay on the lounge with her eyes shut she thought how ironic it was, because just a few months ago when she had turned thirty she had rejoiced, knowing it had taken her that long to arrange her life almost exactly as she wanted it. She had come to feel that her children, who were five, eight, and ten, were out from under now. Over a process of time she had convinced herself that she was not concerned with other people's opinions, and so lived and dressed and said what she pleased. Very little upset her any more. She could actually shut disheveled bedroom doors and

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leave messes in the kitchen sink and rush out filled to the brim with freedom. She said no to everything which tied her to an hour and yes to everything new or spontaneous. Now she sighed and reached to pick her book off the ground when she caught Claude's eye. Yes, it was a fact that she no longer felt freedom before those eyes. They made her self-conscious and aware of herself in some uncommon way which had nothing to do with sex. Oh, she wanted to put it from her mind and stretch out in the hot sun.

But his face and manner intrigued her, so she gave in and watched him. He was reading a brand new Bible with tissue-thin leaves. He licked his index finger each time he turned a page. This struck her as being put on a bit, whether for her benefit or not she could not tell. She felt she had learned one thing about him from observing; and that was he seemed to play his role a little heavy, wearing dark suits, a white shirt and tie out here in the country, carrying his Bible as he walked along the road to the village. The whole outfit somehow didn't go with his large athletic body, his solid jaw and heavy blonde hair. As she looked more closely, she saw he was too white for summer, and his face seemed flat.

Suddenly she was shocked from any further thoughts by howls from the children as they rose out of the river crying hunger. She turned to look at their blue-purple bodies as they ran off the moisture. But their hair was pasted to their heads like soggy scarves. The youngest, Elizabeth, who would soon be five, came up and laid her hand on Allison's throat pursing her shivering lips. Allison knew what she wanted. She still took a bottle at midday.

"But you're nearly five. You promised by five," Allison said.

"Well, I'm not five yet, and you know that, and I won't give it up 'til I am." She screamed at her mother. Allison turned to see if Claude had heard the outburst. He was looking directly at them. Elizabeth did not approve of her mother's diverted attention and so pinched her throat.

Tears rose in Allison's eyes from the hurt. If it had not been in front of Claude, she would have turned Elizabeth over her knee and spanked her. In order to control her temper she shouted to the two other children, "Come on, it's Judy's turn to glue peanut butter and jelly sandwiches together."

As she entered the wide mouth of the barn,

she looked once more at his face, which had moved slightly to watch her. She hoped she could get over having him bother her, and she would soon fall back into the ease of her old life.

Once inside she walked carefully in her bare feet over the rough boards, picked up a soggy towel, slung it from the heavy upholstered couch to the rocker, stumbled upon Jimmy's sneaker, and gave it a whirl in the direction of the balcony where they all slept.

As Allison shoved another sneaker under the table, she heard the voice of Mrs. Pitt, her mother-in-law, behind her. She turned and saw her large hump-shouldered frame blocking the doorway. "I brought you some beans from my garden. Don't use them tonight though. You're invited to the house for supper. I don't want to sit alone with Claude."

"Where's Papa?"

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"He had to go to a meeting overnight in Burlington. Oh, and do be sure and wash the beans and put them right in the refrigerator, dear." She gave Allison her pushing look.

Mrs. Pitt turned to go, but then stopped. "Oh, since it is such a perfect drying day maybe you'd like to use the washing machine. You may be getting short on sheets. You don't bring many with you, do you?"

Allison quietly said, "Thank you. I'll be using the machine one of these days." She closed her mouth tightly.

She watched Mrs. Pitt pass Claude on her way to the garden. Claude smiled with his lips full and vulnerable looking. She felt a tickle inside of her, imagining a couple with marital problems before those lips.

She watched Mrs. Pitt enter her garden and kneel before it. What did she worship there? Was it the weeds or the flowers? She plucked in such a loving manner, because plucking was her life's joy. She plucked the hairs on her face before the mirror at night, at her husband's threads on his Sunday suit, and at Allison, "You don't bring many sheets, do you?" She's plucked few feathers from me, Allison thought proudly. She has discovered only surface things, that I cook my prunes too dry or let the children eat raw hamburger.

But what was Mrs. Pitt really looking for, Allison thought. What kind of harvest did she mean to glean: nettles and misdemeanors or something totally indecent to help her put her foot in another notch, for she was above all else, a moral climber.

That night the table had wild roses on a white cloth, and the chairs had been freshly polished with lemon oil, like the backs of pews, Allison thought.

"Now Claude can be father," Mrs. Pitt said, and put him in the chair with arms. He had on a fresh shirt and smile. He bowed to her slightly, and helped Allison in to a rabbit ear chair. She noticed that his schoolboy oxfords had been shined. His short hair, rougher than she had noticed, was combed toward the front, and his face had the barest touch of pink.

Allison's three children sat on the sides and Allison next to Claude. Claude had bowed his head upon sitting, and when Elizabeth stopped fidgeting he burst forth in a strong voice with a small quick grace that shocked Allison into stiffness.

Without a moment's hesitation Mrs. Pitt flipped her napkin in the air like a flag of peace and in that gesture took over full command of the meal.

"Don't you love our little church, Claude?"

"I like it very much, but I can't get used to it."

"How is that?" Allison asked.

"I mean its structure inside and the size of it. Oh my hometown in South Dakota wasn't so big, about twenty thousand actually, but my church was different. I guess you might say gloomier. Still I can't get used to looking through clear glass. You know what I mean, the outside world is so distracting, particularly with the church right in among the houses. There are the Bowmans outside the window during the whole service, the two children squabbling and fixing bikes."

"I'll speak to Mrs. Bowman and ask her to keep her children inside during the service," Mrs. Pitt said.

"I feel it would be nice some day," Claude went on, "if money could be raised for stained glass. It is a real aid to spiritual concentration."

"I don't like steak," Elizabeth said.

"You're disgusting," Jimmy, the eight year old whispered. "Who ever heard of not liking steak?"

"Now both of you stop it," Allison cut in, "An aid to concentration?" She tried to continue. She looked straight at his light blue eyes which never remained still. He is very shaky inside, she thought.

"I mean churches shouldn't be very different. That is if you went from one to another, no matter what city, you'd always feel it was home."

"You have wiggly eyes," Elizabeth said. Jimmy elbowed her. Mrs. Pitt had finished carving the steak, and passed it.

"I hate steak," Elizabeth said.

Claude touched the pink paper napkin to his full lips, "Tell me," he said to Allison, "were you sick these last weeks? I didn't see you at church."

"Allison doesn't go in the summer. She doesn't do anything in the summer. She rests and absorbs," Mrs. Pitt said.

"Will you come and hear me sometime?"

"Of course," Allison said, and she actually could feel her hands perspire against her knife.

"Just look at that now." Judy poked her mother.

She looked across at Elizabeth. She was slap, slap, slapping the piece of steak on her plate with the palm of her hand. Allison, caught in the rage of Mrs. Pitt's accusation of laziness,

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rose, knocking back her chair into the tea cart. "Darn it, Elizabeth, you just leave the table."

At that Elizabeth jumped up and screamed as though bleeding from the mouth. Then Claude stood up, and in a pious air that made Allison feel more discomfort from him than from her mother-in-law, scooped up the child in his arms and pushed her head against his collar bone and loved her with his nervous hands. Elizabeth stopped at once and

stayed against him while he sat down slowly and with the other hand started eating again. The others around the table were so filled with tensions that the chewing and swallowing was heard aloud. Allison was determined to eat and to show him that she still was able.

"How did you happen to go into the ministry, Claude?" Mrs. Pitt asked.

"Well, he spoke carefully, "I had a religious experience. My family was not religious, but I had a good friend who was. He died in my second year in college. I felt so bad that I would go to church, his church, to be near him. One day, I was staring I think at the organ, when it suddenly came to me that I was called to be a minister."

"You mean you didn't go to church as a child?" Mrs. Pitt asked.

He seemed to hesitate, his tongue lapping the side of his lip. "No, I didn't. As a matter of fact, that time I went to my friend's funeral was the first time I had been in a church ever." Then he blushed. The red made welts on his throat and rose over his entire face. "My father was an atheist and really hated anything to do with the church, and he was pretty angry about my decision."

In order not to look at him and in order to think why he was blushing, Allison rose to clear away the plates and help bring in dessert. Mrs. Pitt followed her quickly before Allison had time to think about Claude other than to feel vaguely that he was a self-made man religiously speaking, and this was like confessing to low birth. He had been ashamed that he had not been born into religion. But Mrs. Pitt interrupted any more thoughts.

"Allison," she whispered, shutting the kitchen door, "What do you think? Don't you think we have to be careful with him? He seems so innocent. We have to watch the sunbathing and all."

The, "and all," struck Allison, but she controlled her voice and said, "Let's have dessert." Mrs. Pitt was standing too close and was too big.

As Mrs. Pitt went into the dining room, Allison stayed behind a moment to compose herself. She thought how well she'd got on with any other guests of the Pitts. But they were older people, used to their own personal slouches, and used to cocktails to haze the glare of late afternoon. They carried bags beneath their eyes far worse looking than the bags in Allison's slacks. She did not know why she should sacrifice her sloppiness and peace because of him.

Upon returning to the table she could not seem to eat dessert, which was a heavy pound cake, and instead took it upon herself to study Claude, who still had Elizabeth snuggled on his lap, now in semi-sleep. It seemed to her his eating habits were a bit consciously sacramental and meant for all eyes to see that they were: the way he tipped his head back to drink or bowed his head when speaking, or even the way he broke his cake bit by bit and laid it quietly on his tongue. He was saying to Mrs. Pitt, "As a matter of fact before I start my ministry, when I finish seminary, I want to go to the Holy Land."

"Do you?" Mrs. Pitt asked, and leaned forward to pick one of Elizabeth's hairs off Claude's shoulder.

"What do you want to see?" Jimmy asked.

"I'm going to walk every inch Christ walked. I only wish they knew for sure where He was buried."

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"But He rose," Judy said. Her mouth was so stuffed that is sounded like "grows."

"I would like to see Golgotha, Jerusalem, the sea," he went on, "I want to feel as He felt. I would even perhaps like . . . I suppose it sounds silly . . . to wear a crown of thorns just to know His agony."

His saying that embarrassed Allison, and she turned her head downward and then back to look at Elizabeth, who was sound asleep, her hair strewn across his chin giving Allison the momentary sensation he had grown a beard.

"We better get her to bed." Allison stood up.

"I'll carry her," he said, and Allison opened the rusty screen door, and they trailed slowly across through the light evening to the barn. Judy and Jimmy stayed in the house to help clean up, because they liked to watch their grandmother scrape the plates, pour vegetable juices into jars, tidy up the meat platter before putting it in the refrigerator in a manner that Allison never did.

When Claude reached the barn, he handed Elizabeth to Allison, and they stood there awkwardly, she saying thank you, and he not intending to move. At last he said, "Mrs. Pitt told me you were a minister's daughter."

"Yes." Allison answered, and she caught her breath. It was the shock of hearing someone say that after all the years of anonymity in the world about her. She started to turn, but he stopped her with the slightest touch on her arm. "There seems to be nobody in this village to talk to about church work and so forth. I mean they don't seem very involved."

"That's too bad." Allison said.

"Yes, I think it's very important to have someone, well, who knows the business to talk to."

"I suppose it is."

"Well," he said. Then he moved awkwardly away. "Good night."

Later that night as Allison was lying in her balcony bed, close to the rain droning upon the steep roof, she thought with distress, why was she being forced into his orbit when she did not want to be?

The next few days she had the helpless feeling that she was on Claude's mind, but did not want to be there. She would catch him looking over at her from his sanctuary beneath the maple, his glasses on, his hands still in his lap, at times his book shut, not even pretending to work.

Then one day when the heat was heavy, and it made her dizzy to read, and she could not concentrate on anything but that face looking vaguely toward her from across the lawn, she stood up and decided to do her laundry. She stuffed a huge pillow case full and took it across to the house. She met Mrs. Pitt on the porch. "Go right in, dear, I'll listen for the children," she said.

Allison dumped the clothes out on the kitchen floor to sort them, avoiding a grease spot near the sink. She put the soap on the counter and started to reheat a pot of leftover coffee. The door opened. She turned to find Claude standing there.

"What can I do for you?" she asked coolly.

He stood there just a moment, rousing a soft blush on his cheek.

"Oh, just a little coffee."

She poured him a cup and then sat down quickly in order to hide the laundry from his sight. He took his coffee and poured an abundance of sugar in it. He drank placing the cup carefully against his soft lips. Then he said, "I understand your father has passed on?"

She nodded.

"How many churches did he have?"

"He had just the one. He had it for thirty-five years."

"You grew up in one manse then and in one church?"

"Yes." She tried to think of some way to change this subject that so easily landed her, feet up, in the realm of her childhood, but suddenly she felt weakened. He went on. "How big a church was it?"

"About nine hundred members." She wiggled the coffee cup to stir it.

"Did you do things like teach Sunday school?"

"Yes, once. But I got sick or something and had to give it up." She stood up fidgeting with the pot of coffee.

"In our town of the two ministers, one was old and the other didn't have any children, and then there were two priests and a rabbi, so I've never known a minister's daughter. It must have been a wonderful thing to have grown up in a manse. We must talk sometime."

Allison moved toward the door, exposing the personal leftovers, spread in blatant necessity on the floor, the undies and slips and pajamas. Her sudden and only desire was to remove herself from his questioning and this vulgar statement of her private life. She said something

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about being worried about the children and ran from the house.

The next day Allison thought she could not remember feeling so miserable since the children all came down with an epidemic of chicken pox one summer. The frustration, the vague feeling that it would never end, that he would never leave her alone, all were there So she decided to gather all the children and go on a picnic in the woods. But the woods were too quiet and got on her nerves and were wet and had too many mushrooms. The whole atmosphere depressed her. The spongy land beneath their feet made it almost impossible for them to sit and lunch. So they returned, eating their sandwiches while walking. They were all complaining and Judy's face was scorched with tears from blackberry scratches.

When they stepped inside the barn, there he was sitting on her couch waiting.

"Hello." He said.

"Did you want to see me?" She asked sighing and slumping into a chair.

"Well, yes. I thought I'd take off a few hours, you know, just to relax and talk."

"Oh." She said, feeling in the cracks for a kleenex she knew had slipped down. Not finding it she left her hand there in hidden comfort under the cushion.

"Tell me really, what was it like to be a part of a manse?"

She made a sudden decision, and threw the words out at him quickly, just in order to shock him in some final way, to free herself. But even as she began she sensed he had gone to battle with her and it would not be easy.

"It was a nightmare."

"Yes, go on," he said quietly.

"There was never a proper meal on time, because no one knew where my parents were or when they would be back. They were both out doing good somewhere. To a child what difference does it make if a parent is out of the home for good reasons or bad? Once in a while like Wednesday night we might eat together, but that wasn't all roses either, because my father would have to answer the phone at least once during soup and once during dessert. Nobody, nobody in the world would have minded if these phone calls were deep personal problems, but this was practically never the case. They were questions like, when was the woman's association meeting, or did they have a scout troop, or now and then the neurotic questions, they had just done such and such, was that a sin?"

Claude's eyes lay quiet for the first time that she could remember.

She went on, "When my parents were home, home was like a settlement house; the study filled with sick people, fanatics or agnostics or just plain tramps. Can you believe it, as a child all I thought that the adult world could be, was gloom. Gloom. We ate it, slept with it, and we prayed it would be snatched from us in our dreams. Even the flowers on our dinner table were left over from funerals. The fact is, the manse was a downright unhealthy place to bring up a child."

She heard Mrs. Pitt's bell to call him to lunch and then could see her face leaning with curiosity toward the barn. But Claude did not move. His fingers showed her his state of permanence, oddly locked together as in the children's game, here's the church and here's the steeple. She knew he was about to throw his hands toward her and show all the people. She caught her breath, and said from some place inside her, "It was all futile and a mess."

"What was all futile and a mess?" His hands fell apart. For some reason she began to blush. It was as though he had caught her in her own trap.

"I mean there was very little accomplished. Those who sinned went on sinning."

The bell rang again. This time Claude stood up. He walked a few steps toward the opening. He stopped and said to her, "I think you are not seeing the whole picture. I think it would have been wonderful to have been brought up in a manse. I would have felt the closeness, a feeling of being in the midst . . ." he hesitated, "Didn't you feel the tenderness, ever?"

The question did what it was meant to do, paled the bridge of her nose, but he did not wait to notice. He rushed out of the barn and toward Mrs. Pitt who was peering into the warm gape of the doorway.

The children were so noisy that Allison could not think. She took the fly swatter and set about killing flies. She counted sixteen flies. Then she settled the children outside on blankets for their rest and she went to lie on the bed. But when she shut her eyes, she gave way to his name, finding it everywhere her mind fell.

She rose and told Judy to watch the other two. She was going to take a walk. She began to go along the river toward the village.

The day was dead. Even the woods seemed pressed together. She turned up an embank-

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ment and went along the road Ahead of her the ill-painted church tower was clear, standing higher than any other structure in the village like a hurt and bandaged thumb.

Poor thing, she thought, becoming a minister when he doesn't feel the atmosphere and maybe doesn't really believe, an outsider just looking for a little reality. Oh, well, it was a service I've done; it's unhealthy to live in someone else's past. It's not good to try and grow out of someone else's soil.

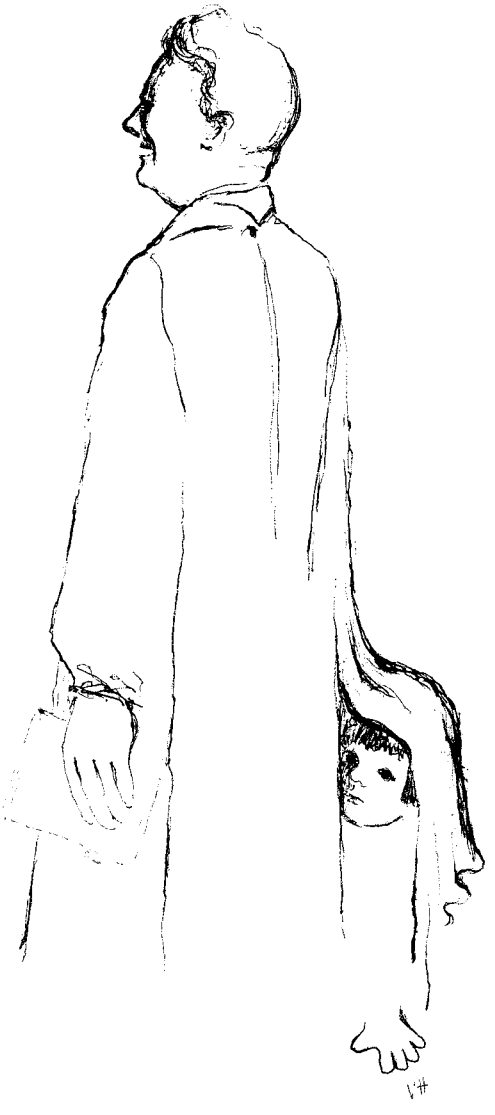
She crossed the yellow cement bridge. She was almost at the village. She walked quickly now. A dog ran between her legs, making her stumble and bringing tears to her eyes, tears of self-pity, from that meaningless invasion of human rights. She was surely hurt in a hurt world. The midday heat which swore life to the fields also wilted them. They grew and wilted simultaneously. She knew if Claude were in the church she had to go to him.

The small church was dusty. The green velveteen cushions were faded gray. The rug, which led up to the Coleman stove, sunken in the floor, was worn down to the canvas backing. He was sitting alone in one of the front pews. He did not hear her enter.

As she entered, she felt nothing, no thread of memory, because this church was totally unlike the one of her childhood, which had great organ pipes like a giant pleated skirt and long windows which seemed gaudy enough to eat. But when she stepped a yard or so down the aisle, she stopped. She could not move. She smelled her own childhood flesh. It was the smell that clung to her when she played, on a weekday, hide and seek in the closed sanctuary, the vapor from wood pores, fern and chrysanthemum leaves dropped from altar bouquets and pressed across the paths of embossed carpeting, the odor of early morning, a quietness that smoldered in expectation, the odor rising from the people as they moved, fur and hair and skin, their voices sighing with anxiety or apathy or peace.

Like proud flesh rising to over-react against a wound, she was filled with joy. She knew she could not stop now the flood of intimacy that she felt with the church. She remembered sitting in the family pew, ornamented with stained glass light. Her head was yellow, her nose purple, and as she moved her arms were green and blue and yellow and red. Mrs Johnson had always been green at the back of the neck, and Mrs. Elliot red at the wrist, and as the Ullrich twins grew each year the top of their heads were different, one year striped and the next blue and the next green.

She remembered her father large and tall, filling the doorway to shake hands and herself as a little girl sneaking in among his robes, which smelled of something like cedar and almond.



It was from him she had discovered the flavor of religion. She had discovered true sorrow from the bent and weeping faces which echoed from the walls of her father's study. Had she been so cruel to Claude, telling him only surface disagreeableness, because he had reminded her that she had abandoned those faces and escaped those sorrows and left the responsibility that the manse had truly instilled and that she could never forgive herself for escaping? He sat before her as he had all summer, the reflection of her guilt and lack of service.

She went forward to him and sat next to

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him in the pew. But he only glanced at her as though she could do no more to him. There were finger marks through his rough hair which fell slightly over his face.

Couldn't he tell without her having to say something mawkish that she had not told him the truth? That her guilt had made her say these things? But he did not even turn his head toward her. She sat a moment longer, distress rising. Why was he forcing her to make him understand more clearly?

She was waiting for the impossible to happen, and then she reached up and with both hands turned his face toward her. Now would he feel it and smell it, the church flesh, of which she was a product? She held his jaw tightly. She leaned forward, discovering the pores of his face where there had only been china and giving herself to his sight.

But suddenly she was startled. She heard footsteps, and when she looked back, she saw her mother-in-law staring at her standing in the doorway of the church. Allison jumped up and in the next second burst into laughter. Here she was being misunderstood in the one good deed she had performed in a long time.

When she stopped laughing she could not look at Claude's eyes, because he was too young to understand the crushed and ironic meaning to her laughter. She stood with her back to him. She could never expain it to him, nor could she ever rescind it. He would now, alone and without further help from her, have to find his own strength and courage.

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The Drowning Man

Hoyt W. Fuller

1

When they were settled on the canvas sheet in the shade of the elm trees, Helen indulged herself in an elaborate sigh, adjusting the brief skirt of her white tennis costume. "It really is nicer here than in the apartment," she said with deliberate irony. "I'm glad you invited me."

Lew grunted. He was stretched out beside her in his swim trunks, his head at her hips, his long umber legs crossed, the feet extending beyond the canvas onto the grass. He reached up, gripped her arm and pulled her down. As her face lowered to his, he cupped it in his hands.

She kissed him lightly at first, then hard. Then he was quite still, his eyes closed. "I didn't invite you," he said after a moment, smiling roguishly.

Helen laughed. It was true. He had not asked her to come with him. Not for a long time. In the first weeks of June, when she was free of teaching for the summer, he would, for the sake of courtesy, ask her along when he started for the lake. He had been going out to take the sun and to swim since early May, just after his university exams were finished. She seldom accompanied him for there were things to do at home and going to the beach seemed a waste of time. Furthermore, she had never overcome her fear of water and could swim only a few yards before becoming panicky, and that always irritated Lew. Being an expert swimmer, he knew her fears were unreasonable and was impatient with them. And she wanted, above all, to avoid annoying him.

She decided on an impulse to come with him, and he had seemed pleased. All the way to the lake they sang, playing a game they had hit on during their first summer together in Chicago, before they were married. Walking through the park or driving along the highway, they took turns running through favorite tunes. They had not done that for many months and Helen noticed that Lew had no new tunes. "You don't listen to the radio any more," she said. His smile had dimmed. "I guess not," he said. She realized that he was making an effort to be merry, and the fact that he was trying warmed her.

She made up her mind not to go near the water. She would even lie in the sun, although she hated that too. It was mid-July and the sun hung flame-bright in a sky of unblemished blue. It had become an obsession with Lew to roast his body as black as possible, and to expect her to join him in the ritual. When she complained that the hot sun only made her miserable, he would growl, "You're supposed to be black," or some variation of that idea. It did no good to explain that she simply found the sun uncomfortable and that she was satisfied with the color with which she was born. The object of his malice, she knew, was much bigger than she.

But today he was not dour. As he carried the wicker carry-all and the canvas to the shade along the Drive, she had stopped him, asking seriously, wanting to please, "Darling wouldn't you really rather put the canvas in the sun?" And he had replied, smiling sardonically, "Yes, I would, but you wouldn't."

She reached out now and stroked his cheek. "Thanks for reminding me," she said.

He opened sloe eyes. "Reminding you of what?"

"That I'm married to a very nice fellow." She thought: "And lately, it has been so hard to remember that."

Lew grunted and closed his eyes.

Helen sighed again, surveying the shore and the lake lying before her, oceanwide, endless. It shimmered and sparkled, variably blue and gray-green and black. On the wall down front a thin, sun-tanned young man turned over, rolled his trunks into a diaper and lay down again. Further along the wall two middle-aged women, their heavy bodies scorched beet-red, took turns spreading lotion on each other's back. There was no one else in sight. The "beach" was an uneven sandless stretch between the South Shore Drive and Lake Michigan. The wall was high, and below it great hunks of broken cement and boulders, remnants of another crumbled wall, angled up from the water. A good swimmer could dive safely over

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the rubble, and anyone agile enough could lower himself into the lake on the broad-surfaced boulders, but this was not a place for lolling or wading. Which was why Lew chose it. He could lie unmolested in the sun or walk down to the water without having to pick a path among hordes of sunbathers.

From the clutch of trees beyond the bulge of the Drive where Lew had parked the car, a trio of people approached—a man and two women. As they came nearer, Helen guessed they were a family—father, mother and daughter. The older people were both fat and gray, caricatures in their swim suits, lumpy and shapeless flesh sagging over the scant garments. The daughter, wan-blond and thirtyish, now stout and square, promised in a decade to emulate her parents' corpulence. All three had broad, bland faces, small, kindly blue eyes, and skin that was doughy pale in the fierce sunlight.

The old woman smiled and nodded as they passed, leading the way to the shade trees. They spread old Army blankets on the grass a few yards away, and the old woman immediately plunked down. She began unloading a picnic hamper, taking out towels, cans of nuts and candy, a bundle of blue yarn. The old man, a cigar rammed into a corner of his mouth, jacked up the khaki shorts that hung like a half-apron beneath the terraced belly, took a towel and lumbered off toward the wall. The daughter gathered sunglasses, book and a towel and followed. The old woman called after them in an accent redolent of the peasant fields of Poland, warning them to be careful. Then she arranged the yarn on her lap and took up her knitting needles.

Helen laughed softly, watching the old man waddling like an outsized gander across the grass. She bent to share the spectacle with Lew, but he already saw it. He had raised his trunk, balanced on his elbows. But he did not laugh, Rather, a scowl quivered on his face. He watched the old man and the girl until they reached the wall, spread their towels and lay down. Then, abruptly, Lew stood up. For a moment he silently regarded the lake. "I think I'll swim a little," he said.

Sinkingly, Helen watched him. Why, she wondered, should he let himself be disturbed by those two fat people and that dull-looking girl? "Lew . . ."

He curtly cut her off: "Why don't you read your magazines!"

She watched him move toward the lake, sinuously, assured, a dark leopard in his forest. He had the lean, smooth muscularity of the swimmer and the imperious carriage of the merely proud. On the wall he stalked along, seeking a place to dive. At length he paused staring directly ahead as if sighting for the Michigan coast across the wide fingertip of the great lake. He brought his feet together, his arms swept forward, his long body arched from its crouch, for a second soared glider-straight, then plunged into the water.

Seconds later he surfaced and swam into the horizon. His arms slashed rhythmically, his head rolled in effortless, lazy-looking movements. Beyond him a motorboat roared, bounced and splashed, towing a bronzed athlete on water skis. Toward the Point that stabbed into the lake beyond the bend of the shore, the white sails of small boats reflected the blinding sun.

Under the trees Helen was motionless, all her senses focused on Lew's image knifing through the waves sent shoreward by the motorboat and its human caboose. The difference between Lew and the wall widened. He became a speck, a fly struggling in a sea.

"That your husband, missus?"

Helen turned to her neighbor. The old woman smiled, her pudgy hands knitting mechanically like the gears of some fleshly machine.

"That young man fine swimmer," the woman said. "Your husband?"

Helen returned the smile. "Yes, he's my husband."

"You good swimmer too?"

"No." Helen shook her head. "I can never quite get used to the water. It's a shame, though. I really have no excuse."

"Good to know how to swim." The old woman grinned shyly. "I never know how. Mavbe I know how I not be so fat now."

"Yes, swimming is good for keeping fit." Helen said. "That's another reason why I should know how."

"Well, you have nice figure. You young. No worry yet." The old woman untangled her ball of yarn. "You got children?"

"No." Something like pain rose from Helen's center, lodged hard in her throat. She no longer even dared talk to Lew about the children they did not have.

"Well, you got plenty of time," the old woman said sympathetically. "Not necessary to hurry."

They were silent then, regarding each other with self-conscious cordiality. The old woman

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pointed to her own huge white arm. "You have nice color," she said. "Not necessary you lie in the sun."

Helen smiled, grateful that Lew was not there to hear that remark. She could accept it as innocent, well-meaning, without pondering from what depths of guilt it sprang or whether it wore the mask of condescension. "Thank you," she said simply.

"Yes, it is so," the old woman nodded reassuringly. "You are nice brown like piece of toast."

Helen gave a smile but made no reply, and when the old woman said nothing more, she lifted a magazine absently. But her mind was not free. She lay the magazine aside and searched for Lew in the glittering water. There was no sign of him. Fear flooded in on her. She turned from the lake and curled up on the canvas with her back to the old woman. She shook her head as if by that gesture she could turn back the tide of dread. "He will not drown," she told herself, and silently repeated the words: "He will not drown."

She knew that Lew could swim for hours without tiring and that he often swam out of sight in the lake. Yet, the knowledge did not release her. She struggled to resolve the panic and confusion in her mind. Again she thought of morning in the apartment and of the drive to the lake. She had allowed Lew's bouyant mood to rekindle the hope that he would cease being so depressed. It was a hope that she seized and clung to desperately, for if there was not this hope, there was no reason for enduring the anguish of their life together. And if she did go on, without hope, she would be sentimental and foolish, hiding behind the word "love." For love was the name she gave to her need of him. "I must think, I must think," she murmured, balling her fists and pounding them on the canvas. Then she lay still, remembering.

2

Helen had been only eighteen, a second year student at college, and she could not have been expected to know that a boy so apparently perfect as Lewis Carter simply could not be so. He was a campus hero —a straight-A student, a member of almost every important campus organization, including the student council, a star athlete, co-captain of the swimming team—and he was, in the bargain, smooth and tall and extraordinarily handsome. And she, like most of the other Negro girls and many of the white ones, had found him fascinating. And if he also seemed, at times, cool and remote, removed from everyone around him despite his great popularity, well, this had merely added an aura of mystery and accentuated his attractiveness. There was no reason at all why she should have imagined that his exterior calm was his wall against some inner storm. Later, when they began dating, there had been some questions, some doubts. Why, for instance had he refused to join one of the Negro fraternities? And why, if he was not a snob, had his best friend been Bill Leighton, a rich white boy, and his closest associates almost all white? But Lew's explanation had seemed plausible enough. Indeed, to her, virginal to deep probings about such things as race and sociology, his explanations had seemed profound. It was a matter of proving to white people, subtly but unarguably, that their long-treasured ideas of superiority were false: there was no way in which they could persuade themselves that they were superior to him. As for the Negro fraternities, well, they were pathetic imitations of institutions designed to bolster the *status quo*. "Lower rungs in the pecking order," he had told her. She had realized then that everything Lew did was calculated, that he seldom truly relaxed, and that the evenness of temper for which he was known on campus was achieved at enormous force of discipline. And she had understood as well that Lewis Carter was as proud and vain as a man could ever be.

Still, there had been nothing to diminish her respect for him, and much to deepen her affection. Then, nearly two years after their first date, she had witnessed a breach in his protective wall. It was a season of racial violence over the land, and the all-pervading tension was as evident in the forced, uneasy friendliness between the races on the isolated midwestern campus as in the riots and beatings in the South and in the cities. Helen and Lew were sitting in her dormitory lounge, talking, not watching the television screen, perhaps even avoiding it, when the late newscast had come on. The amorous chatter among the students assembled there had ceased abruptly. A band of policemen surged across the screen, clubs swinging, into a grouping of chanting students, scattering some, beating others to the ground. A Negro girl, lying where she had been tripped, raised a hand against a club sweeping down at her, and the policeman's foot smashed into her face. A moan like an expression of horror from a Greek chorus had drowned the sound

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from the TV set. Lew had made a choking noise, clamped his hand over his mouth and rushed for the door. Helen had followed him outside and found him in the hedges, sick. He had waved her away, commanding, "Go back inside, go on now!" And she had retreated, warned by a fierceness in his voice that she had never heard before. He had staggered across the lawn swearing, "Goddammit, Goddammit, Goddammit," as if the word was his litanical response to the violence surging inside him.

That had been the beginning of Lew's visible descent into obsessive moodiness. In the months that followed, it had seemed that everything went wrong. First, they were refused accommodations at an off-campus restaurant on the eve of Christmas vacation, despite confirmed reservations; then Lew and Bill Leighton had quarreled brutally because Lew would not lodge a complaint; and finally, the doorman at the Downtown Athletic Club had directed Lew to the rear door when he arrived for a party in honor of the swimming club, not knowing that an exception in club policy was to be made in this instance. Lew had rebuffed all apologies, resigned from the swimming team and moved from the campus to a rooming house in the town's tiny Negro community. The day after completing his final exams, he had left town, receiving his diploma by mail. He refused a position in private industry which Bill Leighton's father had secured for him in New York, taking a job doing social work in the Chicago slums instead. On her way home to Cleveland for the summer, Helen had gone to Lew in Chicago. He had tried to discourage her, explaining that he now planned to go and live in Africa, but she already knew that, whatever he did or wherever he went, she wanted to be with him.

A year later, after their marriage, Helen learned that Lew had been enrolled for a year in the School of African Studies at Northwestern University. Many of his new friends were African students from universities around Chicago, and he had made contact with several African ministries relative to possible jobs. Helen did not want to live in Africa and, in panic, she had insisted that their children be born in America. Lew had raged bitterly, swearing that no child of his would be born in this country, "even if you had to have an abortion," and they had argued cruelly over the children they had not yet conceived.

Toward the end of that first summer, before Helen began work as a temporary teacher in the Chicago public schools, they had driven to nearby Indiana to visit Lew's widowed mother who lived alone in a small cottage at the rear of the big white house where she worked as housekeeper. Lew had lived here with his mother after his father's death in Muncie many years before, but he had never mentioned it to Helen, and the omission bewildered her. Lew purposely left the two women alone to get acquainted and strode off through the woods toward a private lake on the property, and they had silently watched him from the shaded porch. The older woman's face, so like her son's, Helen thought, had the chiseled serenity of Egyptian sculpture. It seemed, deceptively, impervious to passion, but pride and love shone in it. Helen had studied the face, seeking through the mother some clue to the son. She had expected that Lew would seem more human—less intense and combative—in the presence of the one person who had known him all his life, and that she might somehow find entrance into the opening he presented to his mother. But there had been no difference in his behavior. There was between mother and son an empathy that had needed no words or gestures beyond a warm embrace. But suddenly, as Lew vanished beyond the trees, Mrs. Carter had turned to Helen with eyes that seemed to weep without tears. "The white folks just about killed all the joy in that boy," she had said. "He'll hate them long as he lives. No matter what nobody says, he'll hate them. Lord, I've been so afraid for him."

The words had shaken Helen, and a dozen questions had raced to her tongue, but there had been no need to ask them.

"They wronged him when he was nothing but a mere baby," Mrs. Carter had gone on quietly, almost mechanically. "Over in Muncie. He went to the drugstore for a ice cream cone. Had a handful of pennies his daddy gave him. He just went in and got up on one of them stools like he saw all the other folks do. He was a baby and didn't know no better. That cracker behind the counter just hauled off and knocked that child clear off the stool. Called him a nigger too. Then he come round from behind the counter and chased the child off. Lew lost all his pennies too. Just for sitting on one of them stools like the other folks. The child come running home, scared to death. He didn't understand what he did wrong." Mrs Carter had paused then, staring at the spot

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where Lew had vanished into the woods. Then she said, softer than before: "Lew's daddy was sick at the time, and he got so mad he had a heart attack. Died soon after that. And Lew never forgot. He won't never forget."

That had been nine full months earlier, nine months of diminishing hope for Helen, and nine more months of evening classes at the university for Lew. He was absorbed in African studies now, and Africa was the only subject Helen could be sure would interest him. He had long since made up his mind about going away, and because she knew that he knew she did not want to leave the country, even if she was not completely happy in it, she also felt at times that he had decided that she, too, was expendable.

3

The sun, forcing the margin of shade back toward the trees, burned Helen's legs. She drew them up and glanced about her, avoiding the lake. The fat woman had gone away, leaving the blankets dotted with articles of clothing, the cans of goodies, the knitting needles and yarn. Helen saw her standing near the wall, gesticulating to someone in the water below—apparently the husband, for the old man was not in sight and the daughter sat on the wall's edge laughing at her mother. Helen smiled and reached for her discarded magazine. With it in her hand, she finally ceased resisting and let her eyes go to the lake. Lew was there, swimming toward shore, the powerful arms plowing unhurriedly through the water. She drew her hands to her lap and waited.

Lew climbed out of the lake and stood a moment on the wall, as darkly beautiful as a sun-browned Apollo. The slender young man lying nearby raised up and stared, his gaze following Lew across the grass to where Helen sat.

"Feel better?" she asked, tossing him a towel.

He nodded, breathing loud and fast, his chest rising and falling. He wiped his face, pulled the towel over his body, then collapsed beside her on the canvas. She poured him a cold drink, then lighted two cigarettes and put one in his hand. She felt unaccountably buoyed. The previous moment's distress was gone. She touched him lightly, tentatively, as in a sly caress. She was quiet, watching him, waiting. He inhaled the cigarette, letting the smoke trickle from the corners of his mouth. At length he sat up and flipped the butt in the grass. "What did you do?" he asked.

She laughed. "Nothing. I thought instead."

"Ah, real work," he teased, taking her hand, squeezing it. He regarded her closely, a smile playing on his face. "I thought too. Let's swap thoughts."

She opened her mouth to speak, to tell him not what she had been thinking but to express the moment's warm rush of emotion. But then a scream crashed the midday stillness. At the wall the fat woman and her daughter jumped and stomped like frenzied marionettes. "Please, somebody, help!" the daughter pleaded.

Lew dropped Helen's hand, sprang to his feet and bounded over the grass. Helen followed, feeling the pebbles digging at her bare soles. Several people were at the wall already —a group of children, the sun-worshipping young man, the two sun-bruised women. They all gathered helplessly around the spot where the two women performed their desperate dance.

In the lake, a scant five yards from the wall, the fat man fitfully flailed the water, but the violent struggle brought him no closer to the protruding boulders. His agate-round blue eyes were glazed with shock. His mouth hung open and his false teeth, pink and white and perfect, lingered bizarrely—like a disembodied smile—before dropping into the water. He tried to call out, but the water lapped over his tongue and down his throat and strangled his voice. He raised his head, bringing his inundated mouth above the water, and in the effort funneled vital strength from his arms. For a second he stopped thrashing, and then his head sank beneath the water.

The fat woman uttered one last terrible scream and crumpled in an untidy heap beside the wall. The daughter bent over her, her face red and wet and strained to ugliness. "Please, somebody, please help him." The voice was hoarse and weak and already drained of hope.

Helen stood mesmerized. She felt trapped in a surrealistic trance, the tentacles of her consciousness groping frantically, probing a void. Lew . . . She whirled to find him. She had expected to see him in the water. She had been waiting to see him appear beside the stricken man. But precious seconds had passed and he was not there. Now she saw him poised on the wall. It seemed that he was, after all, about to plunge into the lake. But then he stepped backwards, one foot on the grass. The other foot followed, planted itself. He folded his hands behind him purposefully, as if to restrain them from some foolish impulse. And then Helen understood.

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"Lewis!"

The cry surged from her automatically, and the sound of her own voice released her from the trance. She rushed at him, screaming his name. "Lewis!"

He looked down at her, silent, imperious, unmoved.

Hysterical with horror, she pounded at his chest. He grasped her arms. She struggled against him until she was limp, then stumbled awkwardly to the ground. She lay in the grass, and when her whimpering subsided she saw that it was all over. There was no agitation in the water. The low broad waves rolled smoothly against the wall. The moment when the old man might have been saved seemed an eternity away. "He was only a helpless old man," she murmured, knowing it did not matter now. "He probably never harmed a soul in his life."

Helen could not bear to meet the eyes of the mourning women or the little band of shocked spectators. She scrambled to her feet and trudged back to the canvas. Lew came behind her, not touching her, saying nothing. He gathered cigarettes, dark glasses, lighter and magazines, threw them in the beach bag and rolled up the towels and the canvas. She trailed behind him to the car like an automaton. He opened the door and tossed the paraphernalia on the rear seat, held the door open until she climbed in and sat down.

Lew started the car, backing it up, turning it around, guiding it onto the busy drive. His hands were steady, as nervelessly sure as they ever were. For a while Helen stared ahead, her gaze fixed on the rear of the car in front. At last she turned to see Lew's face. It was the same face—proud, serene, handsome. The sun on the skin painted it the color of dark red wine. On the carved lips played a smile, faint but unmistakable.

Dumbly, almost imperceptibly, Helen began to shake her head. She tried to brake her dissolving numbness. But already her mind was groping outward from the shadow of Lew's dark obsession, releasing her. She had watched him descend beyond the point where love could follow. For him it was an arrival. For her, she now knew, it must be a departure.

SILENCE #7

We know
it.

A small
dark
hawk

poised
as some
woman
might be

(elbows
to hips,
forearms
so)

braking
in flight

below
palisades
spiked
with cypress;

Above
a sea,
taming
to milk

on the rocks,

its fierce
greens.

Robert Dana

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The Pot of Gold

J. Carol Goodman

Marion frowned as she stepped out of her clean white convertible and started up the walk. That Bascom boy had left the lawn half mowed again. She frowned once more at the unswept porch and the battered swing which hung from its rafters. Calling, "Mother, where are you?" she stepped into the quiet dimness of the hall and stood unconsciously wiping the dust from the hall table as she awaited a reply. Gray streaks appeared on her clean white gloves.

"I'm here, dear," came a muffled reply from the living room. The afternoon sun flooded the room, causing Marion to squint as she looked about for her Mother. Bright motes of dust danced in the air and the sunlight made all-too-evident the gray film that lay on the table tops. Piles of books stood on the floor under the bookshelves which flanked the bay window at the end of the room. A discarded dust rag lay on one shelf. Mrs. Morrow sat on the floor, wearing an old blue smock, her white head bent over a book.

"What are you doing? You're not ready!" Marion cried.

"Ready for what, dear?" asked her Mother, reluctantly raising her eyes from the book.

"For the Garden Club meeting, of course. Don't tell me you've forgotten?"

"Oh, my! Yes, I did." Mrs. Morrow laughed apologetically and brushed back a wayward strand of white hair. "You see I started to dust the shelves this morning and it just went out of my head."

"This morning! But it's almost two o'clock," Marion said. "And you're not even dressed. You must go. Father would have been so cross to have you moping here in that old blue thing. You know he always wanted you to look nice and to go out 'in society' as he called it."

"Yes, I know, dear, but you'd better go along without me. You see I've just gotten to the part where Irene is about to run away with Bosinney—"

"Don't tell me you're reading *The Forsyte Saga* again!" Marion shrilled. "You've read it

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at least twenty times. I don't know what you see in that old thing."

"Well, you see dear, they are just like old friends. I've never really met anyone like those people in that O'Meara book you brought me. They made me quite ill. All that money-grubbing and bouncing in and out of bed like ping-pong balls—and with just as much feeling, too." Mrs. Morrow's pleasant face took on an unaccustomed look of disapproval.

"But the Forsytes were just as money-grubbing, I am sure," said Marion, sighing as she picked up a sofa pillow and, absently, straightened the stack of old magazines on the coffee table.

"Yes, they were, but there was some style in the way they did it—some tradition behind it. And there is something about Soames' and Irene's story that rings quite true to me."

"I'm sure I never knew anyone like Soames Forsyte. No one was ever that possessive and demanding," Marion exclaimed impatiently.

"Well, somehow they seem quite real to me and much more familiar than those frightfully 'modern' Pennsylvania people."

"Oh, Mother, I can't stand here discussing Galsworthy with you this time of day," Marion cried. "What's that noise?"

Mrs. Morrow cocked her head, listening to the series of dull sounds coming from the yard outside.

"Oh, that's just Gilliam beating the rugs."

"Beating the rugs! *No one* beats rugs anymore. It's bad for the fibers. Where is your vacuum cleaner?"

"It broke down last week and I'm sure Gilliam would never understand a new one. Besides they're so noisy."

"Now, Mother, *why* won't you get a real cleaning woman to come in once or twice a week? This place is a mess and Gilliam never really does a thing."

Mrs. Morrow surveyed her living room with its comfortable slip-covered furniture, the old Grandfather's clock ticking contentedly in the corner, the books and magazines strewn about, the deep fireplace with its tarnished brass screen, and sighed, "Is it a mess, dear? I'm sorry, but who cares—now?"

"I care! It was my home and it always used to be so neat and clean with 'everything in its place and a place for everything' as Father used to say." Angrily, Marion straightened the two Wedgwood vases on the mantlepiece and removed a coffee cup and a half-knitted sock.

"Well, I don't know," Mrs. Morrow said, vaguely. "But I can't get rid of Gilliam—he depends on me."

"Sponges on you, you mean," said Marion. "Why he's half-drunk all the time and hardly does a thing. Father wouldn't have put up with him for a minute. Look at him now!"

Mrs. Morrow rose slowly to her feet, carefully marking the place in her book with the dust rag as she did so. She stood, smiling out the window.

"Oh, that's Bobby Bascom's dog—they're great friends," she said, watching the tall, thin Negro and the small brown terrier playing tag under the apple tree. "Besides, I couldn't do without Gilliam either. He's so colorful."

"Colorful! I suppose it was 'colorful' when he called you up for bail last week from the city jail?"

"Well, I thought it was. None of you children ever called me for bail in the middle of the night," Mrs. Morrow chuckled. "After all, as he said, 'he'd only had a little white wine.' "

"Gin, you mean, and lots of it," snorted Marion. "Mother, you're not helping him, you're encouraging him."

"Oh, but he encourages *me*. Who else would say that life 'is sorta like a rainbow?' It is, you know. All colors, from saddest blue to brightest yellow, shading one into the other from birth till death."

"Ha! And who sweeps the porch while he's philosophizing? I just wish you'd find someone more efficient—and sober. Maybe Delia would come back if you asked her."

"No," said Mrs. Morrow firmly, "I won't have Delia again—she's so disapproving. Why she hovered over me while I ate lunch, muttering about people who read books while they eat as if it were a mortal sin. And always wanting to use the best silver—"

"Well, I really must run now, it's getting late. We'll talk about it some more on Sunday," said Marion, straightening her small white hat and putting on her slightly-soiled gloves. "I just wish you would get rid of that awful green chair and that wreck of a porch swing. I don't know where you ever got it. Father would have died rather than have it on his front porch."

As the sound of Marion's car dwindled down the street, Mrs. Morrow settled herself in the green chair, smoothing its worn arm fondly as she did so. She smiled as she cast an appraising look about the sun-filled room, then she took the dust rag out of her book and began to read.

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That night in the French Provincial bedroom on Maple Drive, Marion sat upright in bed and said, "George, it's just terrible!"

"What's terrible?" asked George lighting another cigarette, not looking up from his book.

"Why, the way Mother's living these days."

"She's all right, isn't she?" asked George, putting down the book.

"I do wish you wouldn't smoke in bed, it's so messy. Why, George, that house is going to wrack and ruin; it is just awful, so shabby and covered with dust. And she won't have anyone but that no-good Gilliam to help her clean!"

"Oh, he's not so bad and he's devoted to your Mother."

"Devoted! I should say he should be! Bailing him out of jail! She says he's 'colorful'—I say he is just a dirty, lazy drunken old man."

"Well, he does say some pretty funny things sometimes," her husband chuckled.

"Oh, you're as bad as she is! Now if she only had some modern appliances. Do you know he was *beating* the rugs this afternoon. When he wasn't playing with that dog. She says vacuum cleaners are *noisy!* And there she is with no dishwasher either and we have to spend hours in the kitchen every Sunday."

"Well, isn't her birthday coming up? Maybe we could get her some of these things if you really think she'd like them."

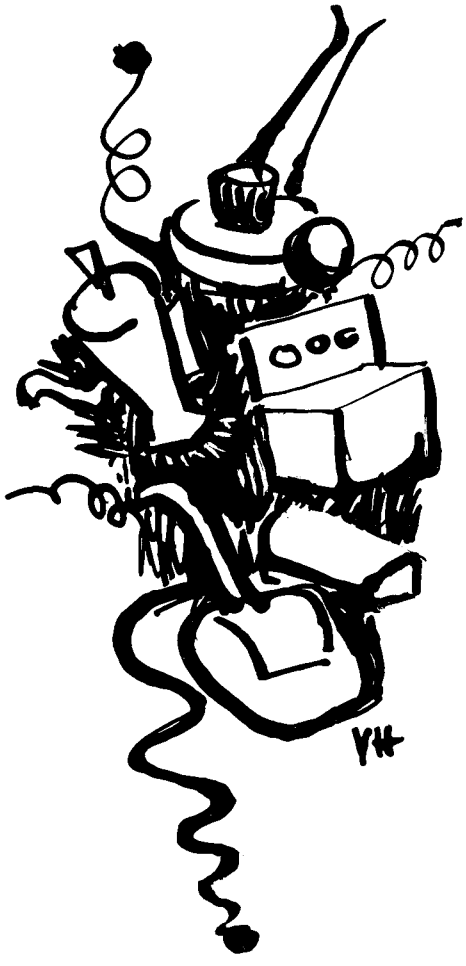
"Like them! It isn't a question of *liking* them! She *needs* them! Why, she is still making coffee in that old aluminum pot and that Bascom boy never finishes the lawn in one day with that ancient hand mower. What can the neighbors think? It looks terrible!"

"Okay, I'll see Joe Jackson about it tomorrow. He can get me a good discount and we will surprise her. We can afford to splurge a little on her seventieth birthday."

"That would be wonderful, darling. And an electric exhaust fan too, for over the stove. Every time we have steak I just freeze because she opens all the windows," Marion said. "I do hate to see my old home run down like that when it used to be so spick and span. Mother's a darling but she has changed so since Father died—letting Delia go, forgetting about Garden Club, sitting around in that old blue smock. It makes me think she is getting senile."

"Senile!" George snorted. "I'd like to be that senile. Why, she reads everything and plays the best game of bridge in town. If you want to know what I think, I think she's having a damn good time *not* fussing over that house continually. Your Father was an awful perfectionist. Why, I remember him, in the middle of a bridge hand, saying, 'Mary, there's a cobweb over that lamp there,' and your Mother would have to go get a rag and take it down then and there. I was afraid to sit down in your living room." George glanced at his wife's face and added, quickly, "But if you think that some new appliances would help her, I'll be glad to get them."

"Thank you, George, I'm sure they would," Marion said as she smoothed the snowy blue-embroidered sheets and settled her neatly-netted head on the pillow. Reluctantly, George stuck a pack of matches in the book to mark his place and turned off the light.



And so it was that on Mrs. Morrow's seventieth birthday she received one electric coffee pot, one power mower, one vacuum cleaner, one portable dishwasher and an exhaust fan for over her old gas stove. Over the phone she dutifully expressed her surprise and thanks to Marion who was housebound by young George's measles. Subsequent conversations that week revealed only that she was very busy and suffering from a curiously persistent headache.

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The birthday dinner was put off until the following Sunday to allow for George Jr.'s recovery from the measles. They had offered to take Mrs. Morrow out to dinner, but she had been very insistent on having it at her house. She didn't want any fuss—"just a nice family party."

When they drove up in front of the house promptly at twelve-thirty on Sunday, Marion noted, with annoyance, that the lawn was, again, only half-cut, but she smiled a bit smugly when she noticed that the porch had been freshly swept and the old swing had disappeared, leaving only the rusted hooks behind. The living room, too, looked quite different with all the books in place on the shelves, the vases neatly aligned on the mantle, and the magazines (only the latest issues) pristinely stacked on the shining coffee table. The green chair was nowhere to be seen.

"The steak will be ready in a few minutes," Mrs. Morrow called from the kitchen. A loud, whirring noise half-drowned out her voice as she turned on the exhaust fan. It was joined by an even louder whooshing and pumping sound as she started the dishwasher.

"I'm just washing up some breakfast things," she shouted as she came into the hall, wiping her hands on her apron. She opened the front door and called, "All right, Bobby, you can do it now." Loud choking and popping sounds exploded on the quiet Sunday air, followed by a steady, strident whine as Bobby went to work with the mower outside. On the sideboard in the dining room the coffee pot chugged and burbled ominously. Then the roar of the vacuum cleaner obliterated its smaller obscenities.

"I just want to take up a few crumbs before the party," shouted Mrs. Morrow as she pushed it over the dining room rug.

"Where's the green chair?" bellowed George as he wandered helplessly around the unfamiliar living room, looking for his favorite dented brass ash tray and the Sunday paper.

"What happened to the swing?" shrieked Sally and George Jr. as they stormed in the front door. "Grandma! Someone stole your swing!"

"No, no, children," shouted Mrs. Morrow, "It was just an old wreck and I had Gilliam take it down."

"Where's the Sunday paper?" roared George. "What's all this damn noise?"

"It's just my birthday presents at work, George—I have to keep the place up or the neighbors will think I am going to seed."

With her hands over her ears, Marion looked at her frantic children and her irate husband—and at the odd little smile on her Mother's lips. "Oh, Mother, I can't stand it—they are all so noisy. Turn them off and tell me where the green chair and the swing are. George can put them back."

Twenty minutes later the only sounds to be heard were the quiet sizzle of the steak under the broiler, the familiar squeak of the porch swing, and the rustle of the Sunday *Times* as George turned the pages and sat, dropping his ashes into the dented brass ash tray beside the green chair.

Marion dropped onto the sofa, picking up a new book from the coffee table. "How do you like *The Clan,* Mother?" she called, shivering slightly in the cool draft now emanating from the kitchen.

Mrs. Morrow stopped humming a tune that sounded vaguely like "Over the Rainbow" and called, "Oh fine, fine, dear."

The book creaked as Marion opened it for what was, obviously, the first time. Smiling, she leaned back and her neat posterior collided with something hard under the sofa pillow. It was *The Forsyte Saga.* The dust rag was still in it, marking the conclusion of "A Man of Property."

THE SNAPSHOTS

Here we are a few Greyhounds
later she said as he reached
for the suitcase
That's what happens when you stare
out of blue glass, two more hours
at most
Or take your daughter out for ice
cream or look at the dates on
old blue letters, or maybe the papers.
Time is when you put some dishes in the sink
and it's ten years later
Or you don't have anybody's belly left
to pat anymore.
She stooped less and less to hand the girl
the chocolate cones, and her vowels
were shifting to another language
and to clicking plates,
bridges.
Sometimes she thought she was
becoming a porcupine, or a dark forest.

David Ray

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Books

THE DESCENT OF THE DOVE

Everything That Rises Must Converge by Flannery O'Connor. With an introduction by Robert Fitzgerald. N.Y.: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1965. $4.95.

The late Flannery O'Connor, who died last summer at 39, was a Southerner and a Catholic, but above all a moralist. Though her fictional world is always recognizable as the South of today—with its racial problems and industrialization—her tales are allegorical rather than realistic. She is a writer with Christian sympathies, and her recurrent theme is man's opportunity for Grace. Miss O'Connor's characters, through pride and ignorance, nearly always fail to achieve the state of blessedness until it is too late for earthly salvation. Since *Wise Blood,* her first novel, some readers have protested that too many grotesque and malformed characters populate her fiction. But Miss O'Connor did not write out of morbidity; her stories deal with those afflicted both in mind and body because it was her belief that the unfortunate are the first to see salvation. If her range was narrow, her stories possessed a moral significance rarely encountered in American fiction since Hawthorne's allegories.

"The Lame Shall Enter First" is, in fact, the title of the longest story in the present volume, a collection of ten stories (including several found after her death). "The Lame" resembles in many respects her remarkable second novel, *The Violent Bear It Away,* in its exploration of the favorite O'Connor situation—the struggle between an adolescent religious fanatic and an unbelieving parent for the soul of a child. Norton, the sensitive young son in this story, deeply mourns the death of his mother, who he is told is in heaven. His father, Shepperd, a do-gooder, ignores Norton most of the time. He takes into his home a teenage cripple, Johnson, whom he hopes to educate and shelter. But Johson is proud, and refuses to express gratitude no matter how much Shepperd does for him. At the story's conclusion Shepperd realizes that in his self-appointed role of Good Shepherd, he has wronged his own flesh and blood. The sin of pride which he decried in Johnson is very much present in himself. Acknowledging this, desolate, he is reduced to belief:

> He had stuffed his own emptiness with good works like a glutton. He had ignored his own child to feed his vision of himself. He saw the clear-eyed Devil, the sounder of hearts, leering at him from the eyes of Johnson. His image of himself shrivelled until every thing was black before him. He sat there paralyzed, aghast.

Shepperd rushes upstairs in a paroxysm of love for his frail son, only to find that Norton has hanged himself in the attic, in order to join his mother in heaven. When the dove descends for Shepperd, it comes to nest in an empty house.

Miss O'Connor might well have taken for an epigraph to this collection the lines from Proverbs XVI, "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." In the title story, "Everything That Rises Must Converge," in "Revelation," and "Judgement Day," we find characters complacent in their racial bigotry—resisting change in social structure, living in fantasies of past affluence and slavery—who are literally destroyed in encounter with reality. In "Greenleaf," one of the most memorable stories in the collection, social prejudice brings about Mrs. May's terrible demise. She is resentful of the emergence of the lower classes represented by the poor-white Greenleaf family, whose surname itself is symbolic of tenacity, endurance, the ability to thrive despite disadvantages. Mrs. May's hatred runs deeper than class-consciousness; she is especially resentful of the Greenleaf boys because her own sons are failures. The climax of all these stories is a violent and morally significant encounter with the opposition, an epiphany that as much harkens back to the original sense as to the Joycean.

The remaining stories set into juxtaposition other antipodal values. In "The Comforts of Home," a young history scholar, proud of his intellect and overly fond of his mother, is ruined by his only encounter with the flesh. He is capable of reading history, is not willing to become part of it. Asbury in "The Enduring Chill"—another sensitive character who has voluntarily withdrawn from the struggles of a world which he finds intolerable—is ill and wishes to die. The story details his tortured ambivalence concerning religion, family and self. He concludes that nothing in this life is significant. More terrible, he comes to the realization that even the one perhaps significant act, dying, is to be denied him:

> Asbury blanched and the last film of illusion was torn as if by a whirlwind from his eyes. He saw that for the rest of his days, frail, racked, but enduring, he would live in the face of a purifying terror.

Once again the Holy Spirit has descended. In "A View of the Woods," a proud old patriarch sells the family's prized piece of land for a filling station location, thereby betraying beauty and faith for prideful gain. The act alienates his beloved granddaughter and brings on a fatal stroke. "Parker's Back," one of Miss O'Connor's last stories, painfully details a young man's inability to understand his wife's religiosity. The story contrasts his pride in adorning his flesh with tattoos and her fierce belief in the invisible spirit.

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Everything That Rises Must Converge is a better book than Flannery O'Connor's first collection, *A Good Man is Hard to Find,* which is to say it is a very good book indeed. Not even in the two novels did she display so richly her genuine humor, her ability to caricature, and her skill in rendering so movingly a portrait of man's relation to God in a secular age. No American author now writing possesses the ear for dialogue dazzlingly shown everywhere in this volume, but especially in "Revelation," which has won this year's O. Henry Short Story Award. Several other of the stories have won awards, and rightfully so: *Everything That Rises Must Converge* is one of the most impressive books of American fiction in our time. One can only lament that Flannery O'Connor, one of our best writers since Faulkner, was not allowed to endure in life as she prevails in art.

Robert Phillips

THEY HAVE FORGOTTEN HOW TO MOURN

One Day. Wright Morris. Atheneum, New York, 1965. 433 pp. $5.95.

In Escondido, California, on that fateful 22nd of November, 1963, a wicker basket containing an infant is found in the donor-bin of Evelina Cartwright's Pound. By afternoon, it becomes known that the mother of the infant is Alec, Evelina's daughter, who conceived it in Paris by a Negro named Lyle Protest Jackson. By evening of that same day, the day that seemed to have no end, Adele Skopje—who was long ago added to Evelina's collection of curious people—is dead.

"Doll," Evelina had asked Adele that November morning, "what're we under?" And Adele's answer was, "Scorpio . . . The danger of accidents is strong . . . Don't travel."

Nearly at dead center of the novel, the first announcement is made of the bulletin from Dallas. Since the novel is entitled *One Day,* and is divided into three major sections—Morning, Afternon, and Evening—the reader expects to find a point of impact of the assassination on the lives of each of the major characters. But there is no impact. The Escondido mortician asks, "What in his life has touched us so profoundly as his death?" Yet the meaning of the President's life is no less inscrutable than the significance of the assassination. Dr. Cowie, the veterinarian in Evelina's Pound, reflects that "this senseless crime not only made history; it made American sense. In each American ear the word from Dallas would acquire its own troubled burden of meaning, and its own intolerable burden of meaninglessness. What word was it . . . . *Impotence.*" The few who search for it find no rapprochement between their lives and the affairs of state. What, then, is the meaning of murder? "We all did it," Alec cries in anger. But in a system of organized irresponsibility, the sense of guilt on the part of the private citizen has a phantom quality. How can a man repent if he is not certain of the nature of his crime? For some, the grief is pervasive; thus Dora, the barber's wife, weeps because when someone—anyone—dies, she dies, too. For others, whose intellectual resources are as impoverished as their capacity for feeling, the answer which is no answer is given to this event—the answer of the sidewalk philosopher to natural disaster, to war, to personal tragedy: The bus driver observes, listening to the news, "Everybody's got a number . . . . The thing is, nobody knows when his own number is up."

Cowie, whom Evelina considers "too deep for people, but good for cats," seems to be the *philosophe* of Escondido. It is his private opinion that there is a greater gulf between man and man, and between man and woman, than that which separates man from beast. Certainly the townfolk have nothing to say to one another of any consequence; everyone is talking at once from the dark, inchoate reaches of his past. Perhaps unwittingly, perhaps not, what Wright Morris seems to be saying in this long and weighty novel is that, though a national hero has been slain, the citizens of the nation do not know how to think or how to feel. They have forgotten how to mourn. They seem to have only the unimportant things in common with one another. The collective consciousness is dim; no one knows how to express awareness of it—either as it is, or as it ought to be. Each withdraws into the narrow sphere of his private experience in the quest for understanding the drama unfolding in Dallas. This quest is fruitless; each finds that local events are as mystifying as those of historic significance. "Living,"

The Son

THE SON

1

The Presence

He-who-came-forth was
it turned out
a man—

Moves among us from room to room of our life
in boots, in jeans, in a cloak of flame
pulled out of his pocket along with
old candywrappers, where it had lain
transferred from pants to pants,
folded small as a curl of dust,
from the beginning—

unfurled now.

The fine flame
almost unseen in common light.

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Denise Levertov

2

The Woodblock

He cuts into a slab of wood,
engrossed, violently precise.
Thus, yesterday,
the day before yesterday,
engines of fantasy were evolved
in poster paints. Tonight
a face forms under the knife,

slashed with stern
crisscrosses of longing, downstrokes
of silence endured—
his visioned
own face!—
down which from one eye
rolls a tear.
His own face
drawn from the wood,
deep in the manhood his childhood
so swiftly led to, a small brook rock-leaping
into the rapt, imperious, seagoing river.

the poet Rilke has said, "has sense only joined with many circles of far-increasing space." The people of Escondido see no cosmic design, have no sense of community, nor of common destiny. Therefore they are doomed to live little better than the beast, aware only in moments of intolerable anguish that their lives had a beginning, and will end; and aware, in a primitive way, that they are bound together by qualities of heroism and martyrdom in which they have lost their faith.

A. Farrell Borenstein

BEDTICK FOR A BANNER

The Ferret Fancier. Anthony C. West. Simon and Schuster, New York, 1963. 256 pp. $4.95.

It has been said of a long line of Irish novelists that theirs was a sensitive and poetic vision of their own private world and that theirs was a language at once as lyrical and colorful as the land that inspired it. Anthony C. West, in his most recent novel, returns to the same basic themes that had inspired his earlier *The Native Moment,* this time to an earlier period in the life of Simon Green, the hero of both novels. But while the first novel takes Simon, a Corran man, into the jungle of city life in Dublin, the present work returns to the rural background of his home as seen through the eyes of a boy growing into manhood. The author's view of the city had been one in which "cities are shithouses where one third of the population pulls the chain on the other two thirds," one in which "the images of men meet with the same indifference as the sidewalk meets the street." West, in his earlier novel had brought Simon from the north into Dublin accompanied by an eel, Ophion. The eel had served its purpose well as a means of bringing Simon into contact with the sordid and cynical world of the city.

Muriel Spark has noted three basic themes in West's earlier work: violence, sex and death. All three merge in the relationship between the boy and his ferret. Jill, the ferret, represents the blind, indifferent cruelty of life. As the boy watches the killing of rabbits and rats, he wonders about the meaning of life, its lack of purpose, and finds no solace in the religious solution of not asking why. Of the rabbit he thinks: "Doomed or not, it might have made one small effort to protest the cold, precise brutality in a last act of chastity, not just giving itself to death like an old whore." The beginning of the boy's skepticism is intimately tied to awareness of the animal:

> But behind the simple murder he was seeing the stark declaration of brutality; the implacable antipathy of creature for creature that was fused into the myriad-threaded fabric of creation, God in heaven or not; the needless hate that tore without excuse or provocation at life—life itself the free excuse for destruction; the total commitment to a blind compulsion to destroy without joy; the pure criminal indifference to fear and suffering.

In his extraordinary insight into the mind of a boy learning to understand about life, death, the mysteries of sex, his relationship to his mother and father, his teachers and friends, West is able to temper the brutality by his humor and by his ability to use words in such a way that one is able to feel and understand without being shocked by the sordid world of Irish life. In his earlier work he had spoken of Ireland "as a continent, each county a compacted nation with a different voice and different eye; thirty two disunited nations in a cumulative state of disease, an old striped bedtick for a banner . . ." The village fares little better than the city, and the teacher, Mr. Rainey, the impoverished family of the Jamesons, old Miss Montgomery, Packeen-Sean, Thubby Knight and all the colorful and extraordinary people that populate this small corner of Ireland grow in stature and in purpose as they attain a universality far beyond the limitations of their narrow environment.

Anthony C. West has been compared to Dylan Thomas, J. P. Donleavy, Joyce and many others. None of these comparisons contribute in any way to an appreciation of his novel. It is the Irish spirit and language that he has captured so well and which encourages comparisons, which explain very little. The mixture of lyricism with earthiness, of despair and hope, of dream and reality make for a work of considerable meaning and interest to readers of all points of view. When Simon deliberately lets the ferret die, he begins to recognize the need to find some purpose in life. He sees her "stiff, dead and quite weightless, the weightlessness . . . the worst thing. Death." The novel begins with Time: "Time and a windless noon,

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the leaves on the full-fledged trees limp in a simmering sun. . . . . Time and trees and the time he had first learned to see and to know a tree—a thing bone bare, nigh dead, and then feathered in a cloud of green, a living thing . . . , that time when nothing had been strange or threatening . . . ." And in the end again there is Time: "bid time good-bye and bid time good morrow: no one could stay the dropping days—life like a big tree and the days falling like leaves until there'd be no more leaves, the Golgotha tree standing bone-bare."

Walter Borenstein

BOOKS RECEIVED

Take Me Where the Good Times Are. Robert Cormier. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1965. 211 pp. $4.50.

The Island of Apples. Glyn Jones. The John Day Company, New York, 1965. 256 pp. $4.50.

The Empty Day. Richard Lockridge. J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia and New York, 1964. 349 pp. $5.95.

Spomono. Alan Paton and Krishna Shah. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. 190 pp. $4.50.

Stockade. Jack Pearl. Trident Press, New York, 1965. 373 pp. $4.95

Among the Cinders. Maurice Shadbolt. Atheneum, New York, 1965. 301 pp. $4.50.

WB

OBSESSION FOR METICULOSITY

The Giant Dwarfs. Gisela Elsner. Grove Press, New York. 1965. $5.95. 309 pp.

Viewing the world through the eyes of a small boy, this bitter satire strikes at every aspect of comfortable middle-class life with telling blows. Lothar's world is at first an ordinary one, but as he dispassionately adds minute detail to detail, it becomes a distorted world, full of grotesque, misshapen monsters, the giant dwarfs of the title.

The simple style, with its precise vocabulary and staccato rhythm, allows the narrator to move quickly from the realistically logical description of an ordinary event, such as losing a collar button, into a wild flight of imagination where the teacher-father forces his students to re-enact his daily frustrations with the button.

The book is at times extremely comic, in the wedding banquet scene, for instance, or where Lothar watches his grandmother pressing trousers under absurdly funny circumstances. At other times the obsession for meticulosity becomes boring, perhaps intentionally so, as in the lengthy but precise description of letters of the alphabet (this half circle opening to the left whose opening is blocked by a vertical stroke), or the placing of the blisters on Lothar's feet (between the fourth largest, or second smallest, and the fifth largest, or for all I care, the smallest).

Winner of the fourth Formentor Prize, Miss Elsner is a young writer of promise who will certainly bear watching.

Mary Byerly

HORROR IN THE HOSPITAL

The Hospital. Jan de Hartog, Athenum Press, N.Y. 1964. $5.95. 337 pp.

The Hospital is a bad book.

It is a bad book of the sort good writers too frequently author. And market. The sort where style, form, and purpose don't blend, and probably wouldn't blend for the author if he were to attempt repeated alternatives to the initial mistake. Still, if de Hartog were to try again, there is a celebrated body of literature of the turn of the century that would help. Not all of the muckrakers' outpouring is necessary to his education, but at minimum some of the standards of Ida Tarbell, Ray Stannard Baker, Upton Sinclair, Charles Edward Russell, Lincoln Steffens, William Hard and David Graham Phillips are the muscle that is the measure of the flabbiness of de Hartog's effort at crusading journalism.

Muckraking journalism, to finger the softness of *The Hospital,* doesn't pose for itself questions such as de Hartog burdens himself to answer, e.g., "How to describe the rapture of mercy?"

While the sophomoric searchings for teleology make *The Hospital* tedious, it is its chameleon nature that makes it impossible. At times solid journalism, at times tawdry polemic, at times unstructured sociological analysis, at times soap opera script, at times utterly boring marital mawkishness, but at all times a chronicle that treats the significant and the humdrum without seeming awareness of a distinction between them. In short, de Hartog writes sociology like an 18th century court fop or a 20th century Washington hostess writes history.

de Hartog examines Jefferson Davis, the charity hospital in Houston, Texas — or, as he more accurately terms it, a "public utility to keep the dead and dying off the streets." The hospital is a joint enterprise of the City of Houston and Harris County. The highlight of the book is one of those occasional great successes of voluntary private initiative in the best spirit of DeTocqueville, Bryce and Herbert Hoover: de Hartog and his companions of the Society of Friends managed to persuade the city not to cut its financial support of the hospital as the city's tactic to force the county to pay more. Voluntary private initiative kept the death rate from neglect constant.

de Hartog, bear in mind, is writing of the only city in America with a domed stadium ($31,000,000.00) and an air conditioned zoo. But to quote de Hartog's voluntary associators, well-intentioned to a man, "You're in Dixie and this is a nigger hospital."

As others hasten to say of Dallas, de Hartog is quick with assurances that the people of Houston are pretty much like those of any American city, as no doubt they are. The implication of this escapes de Hartog totally, for he doesn't sense that this suggests that the horrors of Houston's charity hospital are duplicated elsewhere and often.

It is an attitude that was confusing for me as a child, when regularly we got a makeshift supper because mother and the other ladies of the Florence Nightin-

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gale Circle were off rolling bandages in the basement of Bethany Baptist Church. It was confusing then, for it seemed to me that the war effort was a job for the government. And it confuses me now that de Hartog trusts sixteen Quakers' volunteer efforts as adequate to cope with the horrors of Houston's charity hospital.

After all, Jesus of Nazareth only had to feed the multitude of five thousand, not provide them nursing care — and he had the help of twelve disciples, five loaves, and two fishes.

The most ludicrous aspect of de Hartog's dependence on private, voluntary initiative is the instrument of his faith, which is the Red Cross. There are only a few sociological generalizations which can be made in the certain knowledge they will not be falsified. Among these are that there is no delinquent juvenile in our midst who can't be pushed further in the direction of the hoodlum by becoming a Boy Scout; that there is no teacher so fatuous or incompetent that he or she cannot be damaged by the National Educational Association; and that there is no tragedy or disaster of such stark dimension that it cannot be made worse immediately by the arrival of the Red Cross.

The folly of a Herbert Hoover is in some degree excusable. He was forgiven his callousness because he lived to be 90, which is a sensible thing for a man to do who has probable cause to worry about his reputation at the hands of his contemporaries. But the folly that would rather trust the good intentions of the minked matrons of Houston than the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare is a folly that is scarcely worth distinguishing from the avarice of the American Medical Association.

Paul R. Carlsten

DISCARDED AMERICANS

God Bless You, Mr. Rosewater, or Pearls Before Swine. Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, N.Y., 1965. $4.95. 217 pp.

"The Rosewater Corporation occupied two floors at 500 Fifth Avenue, in New York, and maintained small branch offices in London, Tokyo, Buenos Aires and Rosewater County. No member of the Rosewater Foundation could tell the corporation what to do with the capital. Conversely, the Corporation was powerless to tell the Foundation what to do with the copious profits the Corporation made."

The capital was $87,472,033.11 on June 1, 1964. The income was $3,500,000 a year or $10,000 a day. These huge sums were "stashed into a foundation in order that tax collectors and other predators not named Rosewater might be prevented from getting their hands on it."

God Bless You, Mr. Rosewater relates the efforts of a young, five-foot-three-inch, churn-butted predator named Norman Mushari to wrest control of the Foundation from the first and only President of the Foundation, Eliot Rosewater, by documenting Eliot's lunacy.

In the first six years, Eliot gave away 14 million dollars including the financing of a report on alcoholism in San Diego which he was too drunk to read when it was delivered. When the novel begins eleven years after that report, Eliot has given away approximately $40,000,000 more of the foundation income including such diverse things as costumes for the Metropolitan Opera and a large number of engines to volunteer fire departments. He is still drunk.

Eliot Rosewater has had it with the world and its crass hypocrisies. He decides to return to Rosewater, Indiana, and to devote his life and the Rosewater Foundation to the natives of Rosewater County. "I'm going to love these discarded Americans, even though they're useless and unattractive."

Soon every phone booth in Rosewater bears a sticker: "Don't kill yourself. Call the Rosewater Foundation." In a dirty, one-room walk-up, Eliot has one suit of clothes, one shirt, one of each bare necessity of life but two telephones—a standard phone to take Rosewater Foundation calls and a red phone for the fire calls because Eliot receives all fire alarms (he gave the Rosewater Volunteer Fire Department six new trucks and the "doomsday bullhorn" fire klaxon.)

Eliot had been sued for divorce by his French wife Sylvia. His father, arch-conservative Senator Lister Rosewater of Indiana, knows Eliot is crazy as a bedbug. Predator Norman Muskari has a vault full of documents to prove the charge and the only other living Rosewater, an innocuous voyeur cousin Fred who sells insurance in Rhode Island, is also in Norman's vault.

Using amiable devices, Vonnegut switches his story from Civil War to today, from a Paris Salon to Rhode Island, from Vashti, Texas, to Washington, D.C., to Rosewater, Indiana.

Poets, scientists, lawyers, psychiatrists, politicians and half the unlovely, eccentric population of Rosewater County, Indiana, move swiftly and effectively through the novel.

Only a lunatic could love these useless people. Eliot is one. Only a lunatic would reveal Eliot's master stroke in the defeat of Norman Muchari's marauding scheme.

The jacket blurbs claim Conrad Aiken calls *God Bless you, Mr. Rosewater* "a brilliantly funny satire on almost everything" and Graham Greene calls Vonnegut "one of the best living American writers." It is easy to agree. When the present world and the actions of the people in it register in clear full focus, a man can weep or laugh. Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. chooses to laugh bitter laughter. Highly recommended.

Armarius

LIFE HAPPENS TO AVA

Mountain of Winter. Shirley Schoonover. Coward-McCann, Inc., N.Y., 1965. 256 pp. $4.95.

Ava Knuutinen was born on a farm on the side of a mountain called Old Big. The mountain was still rich with timber because the Finns who had settled the timberland "were too stubborn" to sell it. But in the late Depression, the iron ore mines were closed down, and there were hard times for the Finns, the Swedes, the Hungarians and the Czechs who had worked in them.

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As a young girl, living with her parents and grandmother, Mummu, Ava was given more and more responsibility in working the farm. "In the summer she was allowed to work full time in the hayfields, pitching hay, driving the team of horses, tending the cattle." On Saturday nights, after sauna, she went with her parents to the country dances "and watched the wild young Finns come in from the dark to dance and court and fight." When she is seventeen, her parents are killed in an automobile accident, and Ava is left with Mummu to work the farm alone. Mummu has form and strength beyond that of any of the other characters in this novel; yet, like them, she lacks distinctive features. She is immutable; she is bedrock. She sustains her grand-daughter during her affair with Mel Steen, from the first feelings of ecstatic love to the final humiliation and defeat. When this strange, tortured affair is over, the old woman tells Ava, "I'm done feeling sorry for you." Since Ava is the last of the family, Mummu wonders, "Did we come all this way to die out?" She refuses to accept this, and summons Paul as the new crew boss on the firebreak — the post that Mel had deserted the year before, after stealing the prime timber of the region. Mummu perishes in the fire on Old Big — the fire that destroys farm buildings and scars the earth. Ava returns to the ruins to seek the old woman's essence. She "sat down among the boxes and pictures; the familiar homely things eased her." Here, in the root cellar, she knew without any more telling: Life didn't promise to be easy. Love didn't come to do you good . . ."

In her first novel, Shirley Schoonover describes the Finnish customs in vivid detail — the saunas, the dances and folk music, the shivarees and holiday festivities, the men's contests of endurance. The Finns themselves appear as character types — a proud and obstinate people, hardy and often taciturn. Ava, too, is more of a character type than a personality with whom the reader can identify. Her moods, her passions, her fortitude and loneliness — all are immanent. She grows as a mineral or a root plant, more than as a child of our times. The meanings of poverty, of the "Big War," of life and of love are not articulated. These conditions are, simply, there, as the soil and mountains and elements are there. The *Mountain of Winter* is written in the tradition of the regional novel, filled with presences rather than with the *angst* of the human condition. Events are described but not examined. When her childhood friend Piss-ant dies, Ava kicks and bites the man who holds her up to look "into the stinking sweet of the casket," and she goes home to draw her own Crayola portrait of him — one "that was better than the photograph." At fourteen, on her first date with Matti, she couples with him on the seat of his car; afterwards, in bed, she "stuck her head under the pillow to hide from the too fast coming and going of life." Mel remains a mystery to her, too; she is mortified by his savage cruelty, but responds to his betrayal by retreat into work and solitude.

Life happens to Ava. Slowly, painfully she absorbs it. She is passive. There is no heroism, no fatal encounter. Like the land, like Old Big, like the tree of her childhood wishing, the weeping willow, whose trailing branches made "a whispering green sanctuary" for her dreams, Ava is subject to natural law; she is open to the harsh cold of the winter, to the vicissitudes of the elements. She is like "the eternal man" Oswald Spengler described, who is "independent of every culture . . . one who preceded it, he outlived it, . . . limited to soil-bound callings and aptitudes, with a mystical, dry, shrewd understanding that sticks to practical matters." Life is a cycle; Ava is bound to its revolutions. Old Big is as much of a heroine in the *Mountain of Winter* as anyone can be — and more of one than the young woman whose story it chronicles.

A. Farrell Borenstein

SUSPENSE

The Sentries. Ed McBain. Simon and Schuster, New York, 1965. 319 pp.

A group of American super-patriots, extreme, unaffiliated, right-wing types, attempt to put an end to the communist government of Cuba by forcing the U.S. to take direct action against the Castro regime. They are led by a former Second World War P.T. boat skipper, who had been discharged from the Navy for black marketing. A small Florida Key is occupied, its population captured, and a Coast Guard cutter is hijacked. All attempts to stop the plot fail. Fate maintains the international status quo.

Lacks a center of gravity. A maze of actions. McBain should have stayed in the 87th precinct.

End of a Party. Hillary Waugh. Doubleday & Company, Garden City, N.Y., 1965. 211 pp. $3.95.

The attractive wife of a New York advertising executive is murdered, apparently without motive. The last person to see her alive, a wealthy playboy, disappears. Clues are distinctly missing. Scene is suburban Connecticut, the haunt of Police Chief Fred C. Fellows. Dirty linen of the local middle-class is thoroughly aired.

Chief Fellows and *End of a Party* are simply dull.

Passport to Oblivion, James Leasor. J. B. Lippincott Company, Phila., 1965. 210 pp. $3.95

Dr. Jason Love, British country physician, and automobile enthusiast, agrees to aid the British Secret Service. Britain's life blood, near eastern oil, and the Anglo-American alliance are the stakes of the game, as Love muddles about amid a profusion of agents, double-agents, and sophisticated gadgetry.

Mr. Leasor's first attempt at suspense writing demonstrates potential. Perhaps his next effort will produce the results the reader finds himself expecting of this one.

William A. Stoppel

Man Overboard. Allan MacKinnon. Doubleday & Company, Garden City, N.Y., 1965. 190 pp. $3.50.

Don Kendrick, bachelor reporter for a London newspaper, having completed a series of feature ar-

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ticles on South American countries, finds visiting his young nephews in Canada unbearable. He decides to spend his remaining vacation on a trans-Atlantic steamer and in London. An attractive widow, also bound for England, causes Kendrick to leave even more hurriedly than he had planned. This particular widow proves to be an involved and dangerous avocation. The British police and other parties show unusual interest in a relaxing newspaperman. Oil again plays a role.

Pleasant entertainment, though a bit heavy cosh and corpse.

William A. Stoppel

AN ADDED VARIABLE

The Negro Cowboys. Philip Dunham and Everett L. Jones. Dodd, Mead & Co., N.Y., 1965. 230 pp. $5.00.

A first reaction to the appearance of *The Negro Cowboys* is relief that Professors Dunham and Jones made the discovery of the manyhued West before television. It is an easy matter to picture the executive-level at ABC gathering to conclude, gleefully, that the negro cowboy is the perfect device to give recognition to the social revolution of our time while continuing to pander to the Lowest Vulgar Denominator.

In fact, however, even ABC exploited the negro cowboy theme several years ago. Buffs will recall the definitive performance of Sidney Potier as negro cowboy in the Maverick series. Indeed, television encountered then the difficulty that complicates the task of Dunham and Jones: the finite number of good and bad guys available to populate the morality plays of the Old West have been sorted into the stock characters the reader-viewer expects. Color is an added variable to the saga that is by agreed anticipation kept to the minimum stereotype variables.

In consequence, Dunham and Jones narrate the most frequently told story in our literature, from the pulps of the 1890's to today's television. They deserve praise for their narrative, for it falls only barely short of the mark of the masters like Owen Wister and Frank Dobie. At the same time, the only new element in their narration is the counting of the numbers of negroes among Geronimo's captors, or Billy the Kid's sidekicks, or the hands and wranglers in the first drives north to Dodge and Abilene.

Dunham and Jones suggest that social concern as well as historical accuracy is a motive for their effort to recapture for the negro a universal awareness of the negro's contribution to the conquest of the West. A quandary for the authors is the negro's assimilation in the Old West to the extent that counting black noses accurately is impossible because color wasn't established in the chronicles. Their sleuthing to get beyond the assimilation of the past to aid the integration of the present is the irony that always accompanies historians' work when they take the melting pot myth seriously.

And yet the rediscovery of the darker tones in our picture of the Old West includes the black-skinned black-hearted, the negro villains like Cherokee Bill and Isom Dart and Nat Love, alias Deadwood Dick. This evidence of fault and foible may help a nation of wops, frogs, limeys, micks, kikes, lunkheads, bohemies, spicks, krauts, and lesser folk adjust to the weight of three centuries' guilt. Added to the inarticulated suspicion of the negro's superior artistic, athletic and sexual prowess, the fear of a similar moral superiority is more, possibly, than a collective bad conscience can bear. Cherokee Bill may do as much for the mental health of realtors in the long run as Malcolm X.

Paul R. Carlsten

BEYOND THE ..... HORIZON

A Night Of Their Own. Peter Abrahams. Alfred A. Knopf, N.Y., 1965. 237 pp. $4.95.

Richard Nkosi is an identity used by many men in the service of the underground in The Union of South Africa. Richard Dube, the current Nkosi, paddles ashore from a submarine in the black of night and carrying only a package filled with currency to finance the underground. Westhuizen, a man who was white until the law declared him colored a year previously, escorts him past the guards to Nkosi's rendezvous with underground leaders.

From this bizarre beginning, Peter Abrahams weaves a novel of adventure, suspense, love and social commentary which makes Selma, Alabama, look like a turn-of-the-century Sunday School picnic. In a land where computers maintain detailed, birth-to-death dossiers on all of the colored, all of the Indians, and already on *most* of the whites, the brutality of an automated tyranny increases inexorably as the white minority attempts to stave off the inevitable and ultimate take-over by the colored majority.

In the middle are the South African Indians, hated by both, feared by both, allied to both, and slaughtered by both blacks and whites.

In the home of Doctor Dawood Nunkoo and his crippled sister Dee, Nkosi meets the other local leader of the Indian underground, Sammy Naidoo, who kills Westhuizen before the police can interrogate him. Nkosi's flight goes even further underground as police action makes his escape back to Europe less likely.

Nkosi's passbook reaches the hands of Karl Van As, Deputy Head of the Natal Bureau of Internal Security. Van As recognizes Nkosi's picture as being that of Richard Dube, expatriate colored artist whom he had met in Paris. Keeping this recognition to himself, Van As, a bright, decent, right-thinking, young white on the way to the top in government, sets the machines of the police state in motion to capture Nkosi after visiting his mistress of seventeen years in an effort to rationalize his acts after Sammy Naidoo chose death rather than reveal Nkosi's hiding place to the state. Before his death, Sammy accused Van As:

> "But you work the system: in fact you are its real brains. Without people like you, without your brains and your talents, the wild fanatics of *apartheid* would not be able to operate for long. You and I know that the genuine believer in *apartheid* is a curiously stupid and guillible creature. But it is you, Mr. Van As, people like you who keep the system alive and strengthen it. You are the really guilty men, and you know it."

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The massive destructive forces are epitomized in personal relationships: black and white by Van As and Mildred Scott, Van As and Nkosi; black and Indian by Dr. Nunkoo and Dee and Sammy Naidoo in their work with Nkosi; Indian and white by Van As and Sammy, Old Man Nanda and Chief Inspector Du Plessis, Natal, C.I.D. All these characters live desperately aware that whatever they do cannot halt the disaster course on which South Africa is rudder-locked. Old Man Nanda expresses it for them simply, "You'll never really change the world, but I think that I understand now that you must try . . ."

Readers of *Tell Freedom,* the autobiography of Abrahams' early life in South Africa, will find again authenticity of setting and depth of feeling in *A Night Of Their Own.* Recommended for everyone.

Bernard E. Richardson

TIRED TERROR

Soul Of Wood. Jakov Lind. Grove Press, N.Y., 1964. 190 pp. $3.95.

He's horrifying. He's humorous. He's savage and he's hilarious. Grove Press, his publisher, calls the German author Jakov Lind, a writer with "grim inventiveness hard to match in the entire range of modern writing." They have just published a translation of his book of stories, entitled *Soul of Wood.* The seven stories (the title story is of novella length) about murder, incest, cannibalism, etc., blend together the worlds of stark realism and nightmareish fantasy. Both worlds are of hate and death. Both are rather uninteresting.

This shouldn't be the case, for Lind employs every element of hate and perversity in which to present a frightening vision of our world. Unfortunately he is not very successful in presenting anything. Not even the better stories manage to make much of an impression at all. They certainly deal with horrible subjects: In "Hurrah For Freedom" there is a family living in the nude, that breeds incestuously, and devours its own young. In "The Window" a man finds "God" in a neighbor who can supply a woman without breasts, the philosophy being that "God has everything, breasts have nothing. It's only flesh. It leads to nothing." "The Judgement" is about a father and son who meet for the last time. The son is a condemned murderer of twelve and wants to make his father the "lucky thirteenth" victim. If the son can strangle his father just before the execution, it "will give the papers something to write about." For the fame and celebrity are the murderer's immortality, Lind says. But the father manages to kill the son instead, yet he is not punished by the government. The idea is that "the one that gives the seed has the right to punish," and "besides, the government had saved itself twelve hundred schillings" on the execution.

Decidedly the best story in the book is "Journey Through The Night." It intends to operate on two levels: as a fantasy of horror and as a philosophy of fatalism. Two men are on a night train to Paris. One is the narrator. Supposedly looking out into the night, he says: "What do you see when you look back? Not a thing. And when you look ahead? Even less. That's right. That's how it is." The other man is more of a creature. When the narrator falls asleep on the train, the man will kill him and eat him. They talk about this, philosophize about this, through the story. The creature describes how he will cut up and devour his victim; the narrator speaks to the reader terrified, yet wondering if there is not justice to the act. "Here is a madman," the narrator says, "he wants to eat me. But at least he wants something. What do I want?" The creature tells him that this was his aim in life, to take this train, to be killed, to be eaten. Isn't Life just that, they ponder: one is to eat and the other is to be eaten?

Whether Life is that way or not is as unanswerable a question for Lind as it is for anyone. The important things seem to be how he handles his questions, his philosophy, and his stories. He doesn't do it too well. His prose is flat and simple: it is meant to be that way, but for an effect of power and horror—and even humor!—that is never quite achieved. The stories come off only as dull and tired. The philosophizing through the grotesque and terrible may be worth doing, but only if it is made impressionable in some way. Lind doesn't do it with these stories.

David Meyer

ROOM AT THE MIDDLE

The Jealous God. John Braine. Houghton, Mifflin Co., Boston, 1965. 287 pp. $4.95.

Sexual passion *vs.* religious conviction is a lovely topic for a novel.

Does Vincent Dungarvan possess a genuine call to serve God as a Catholic priest? Or does this mother-ridden, thirty-year old schoolteacher remain a virgin because he is too self-centered and full of fear to make love to a woman? Does Vincent long for priesthood because of a love of God or of a fear of women?

John Braine tussles with these vital questions in *The Jealous God,* a novel of acute characterizations and sensitive insights. Rather slothful, not ambitious, very introverted, Vincent lives with his mother who is also a teacher. Mother is an efficient homemaker as well. Mother wants Vincent in the church and never lets him forget it. His two extroverted and conformist brothers, their wives and their children enforce Vincent's desire to avoid a life such as theirs.

Then he meets Laura Heycliff, librarian and a Protestant. Laura is separated from her sexually aberrant husband. Vincent loses his virginity.

The strange denouement is as unexpected, as believable, and as awkward as life itself. This is John Braine's first important novel since *Room At The Top.*

Armarius

LIKE THE RAIN

Amazing Grace. Robert Drake. Chilton Books, Philadelphia, 1965. 156 pp. $3.95.

> Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
> That saved a wretch like me!
> I once was lost, but now am found,
> Was blind, but now I see.

Growing up in a small southern town a generation ago, Robert Drake (who may or may not be the author

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himself) learned his first hymn from his nurse. Words of this and other hymns fascinated him, although he couldn't understand why "you were always calling yourself by bad names, such as wretch, or like in 'Alas and did my Savior bleed,' where you called yourself a worm; or singing about terrible things like in 'There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Immanuel's veins.' "

In an early episode, we learn that he conscientiously "fulfilled his obligation" every day, following his mother's admonition, and thus with little trouble had perfect spelling papers in the first grade. At the end of the year, he really expected to win the spelling bee. But John Edgar, from Miss Beersheba's room, won; Robert, hurt and puzzled, finally realized that John Edgar was probably fulfilling *his* obligations, too.

Organized religion and church activities were an important part of community life in Woodville, Tennessee, but these simply told stories focus on it as only one facet of the world as seen by a growing boy. School, family picnics, courtship, love and marriage, birth and death, violence and beauty, all are influential in developing his understanding of life.

Each story can be read independently, but taken together they form a unified, nostalgic evocation of a way of life that has all but disappeared. The world of childhood and adolescence so well portrayed is a universal one, however. With each chapter we see Robert growing in wisdom and understanding. In the title piece, on a day when he has become sharply aware of the difference between life in Woodville and the life he dreams of living, he begins to see that grace may be like the rain, falling on everyone, whether in city or country, educated or uneducated, and that's why it's amazing.

Other chapters relate stages in his growing up such as the death of a favorite cousin, the summer of the window-peeper, a visit to a Pentecostal Holiness Church with a nine-year old evangelist, and the suicide of the town's most glamorous figure, Mrs. Marcus Bascomb. In the last chapter, after his father's death, Robert learns what it really means to come home.

The deceptively simple style conceals a skillful use of language and colloquial expressions which captures the essence of time and place. With gentle humor and deep understanding the author has told a delightful story of a boy and his world. *Mary Byerly*

PURELY DELECTABLE

The Ballad of the Flim-Flam Man. Guy Owen. Macmillan, N. Y. 1965. 277 pp. $4.95

A former member of the Briarpatch Boys singing group, Curley Treadway is AWOL from Fort Bragg. After finally belting a sergeant who made an army career of belittlin' Curley's speech, Curley grabbed his guitar and hit the rods harboring a vague notion of getting to Wilmington to appear on a TV talent show and thus resume his singing career.

In Ellers Bend, North Carolina, Curley sees an old man and his satchel booted out of a boxcar. Helping and protecting the old man leads to a partnership of master and novice at flim-flammery.

Flim-flam is the art of swindling.

Mordecai Jones (alias, J. P. Morgan, John D. Rockeyfeller, Mr. Micawber, P. T. Barnum, Dombey and Son, Mr. D. Quixote, etc.) is on the lam from a southern prison where he obviously had time to read extensively. Mr. Jones is an innovator, a masterful actor, an instant improvisor adept at simple disguises and an excellent teacher.

Most of all, Mr. Jones is a keen student of mankind with a nice understanding of human shortcomings. Repeatedly, he demonstrates that you can't cheat an honest man. Each victim is actually an incipient swindler without the courage to select his own mark. Every victim was duped because he expected to make illegal gains.

Beginning with a little three-card monte in an Ellers Bend store, the partnership of Jones and Curley immediately takes to its heels with irate marks in pursuit. Their flight is financed by successive flim-flams including one which nets them a truck loaded with bootleg whiskey which provides not only transportation but ready cash when needed. They cross and criss-cross the country around Ellers Bend pursued by virtuous victims including farmer Packard, storekeeper Elmo Teeter, bootlegger Doodle Powell and an assortment of law enforcers.

In addition to the rollicking flim-flams, Curley plays his guitar at a couple of dances with most of the victims in attendance and at which he falls in love with Bonnie Lee Packard.

Lengthy quotation from Owen's deft book is avoided only by restraint. Every page is crammed with Curley's southern folk speech ranging from remembrances of his wise father to gentle outhouse graffiti and with the flim-flam man's comments on the human race.

The Ballad of the Flim-Flam Man is a wildly funny book. It has a beginning, a middle and an end.

If you enjoy American humor, read this novel. Very highly recommended.

Armarius

IN A HOUSEHOLD OF WOMEN

Ladies of the Rachmaninoff Eyes, by Henry Van Dyke. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 1965. 214 pp. $4.95.

During the first half of *Ladies of the Rachmaninoff Eyes,* the reader feels certain he is experiencing another set piece, another painful *roman a clef* filled with the memories of a precocious youth in a household of adults. Despite the setting, a small town in the midwest, the novel has all the trappings of Southern neo-Gothic twilight, including a deaf man and a peacock strutting on the lawn. In many respects, the novel could be imitation McCullers or early Capote. But in the novel's final chapters, author Van Dyke creates meaning out of memory, importance out of trivia, and the novel concludes with an epiphany which is art of the first order.

The story involves the relationship between Etta Klein, a wealthy Jewish widow, and Harriet Gibbs, her Negro servant-companion. The two have lived together for decades, and both mourn the death of Mrs. Klein's

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son, Sargeant. Harriet contends that she was the closest to Sargeant, while Mrs. Klein refuses to believe anyone but herself mothered the boy. The story is narrated by 17-year-old Oliver, Aunt Harriet's nephew, who lives with them and who becomes a surrogate son upon whom both can lavish their affections.

The two ladies are obsessed with the memory of Sargeant. Mrs. Klein answers a spiritualist's newspaper advertisement, and soon Maurice LeFleur arrives. His task, explains Mrs. Klein, is to hold a seance and invoke Sargeant's spirit so she may determine why he took his life. During the seance, in a moment of jealousy, Harriet reveals she has known the reason all the while: Sargeant was a homosexual, and his lover had deserted him.

Oliver is curious to investigate the validity of this charge; finally, among Sargeant's possessions in the attic, he finds correspondence which confirms the dead boy's homosexuality. It is then that Oliver realizes what may well be his own fate: raised in a household of women, privy to their petty squabbles and needs, tutored entirely at home, he has become a precious and isolated young man. He then realizes his spurning of the advances of Della, the household's oversexed maid, may be symptomatic of his own lack of manhood. When deaf Bertram, the gardener, hacks off the peacock's head in a moment of grief caused by Harriet's sudden death, we are given the symbolic act which corresponds perfectly with Oliver's doubts. The severing of the peacock's head represents his emasculation, and associates his loss of manhood with his Aunt Harriet. But Oliver realizes his situation in time, and when he departs for college that fall, it is with determination to adjust to the world outside:

> "The plane flew over the cities and through the clouds. As it pushed eastward in the dark, the tears came. But I decided right then and there, in the eleventh hour, that they would be the last tears; there could not be any more. I guess Bertram knew what he was talking about, after all. When a peacock's days are over, they're over."

Ladies of the Rachmaninoff Eyes will doubtless be compared with Truman Capote's famous *Other Voices, Other Rooms*. Both are first novels by young authors who demonstrate highly individualistic styles and an admirable perfection of craft. Both deal with the problem of a fatherless, impressionable young man coming of age in bizarre and isolated surroundings, faced with homosexuality as the alternative to accepting reality and attaining manhood. In the Capote novel, emasculation is symbolized by the slaying of a snake. Unlike Capote's Joel Knox, Van Dyke's Oliver escapes his state of emotional paralysis, and the novel is a less sinister one. *Other Voices, Other Rooms,* however, remains remarkably fresh seventeen years after its publication, whereas some of Van Dyke's minor characters are clichés — especially Belle Thompson, the good-hearted slut down the road. (The name would, of course, be Belle. It is a part Angela Lansbury is destined to play with great vigor.) And Henry Van Dyke does not possess Capote's gift for language. Few writers do. What he does possess is a fine talent for creating mood and for telling a tale with remarkable assurance, making *Ladies of the Rachmaninoff Eyes* an impressive first novel.

Robert Phillips

SUNSET IN THE EAST

Hitler Moves East, 1941-1943. Paul Carell. Little, Brown, Boston, 1964. 640 pp. $10.00.

"To describe the battles of a war which was lost and has gone down into history as a criminal act of aggression represents a difficult undertaking, almost too difficult for a chronicler in our decade. There is a great temptation to correct the decisions of the battlefield with the pen, or to wade about in the mire of futility and guilt." Thus Paul Carell outlines the problems he faced in his attempt to write a description of Operation Barbarossa. The author has neither attempted the former nor succumbed to the latter, but rather has simply tried to describe the military operations and the thinking which governed the battlefield actions.

Carell begins his account in June 1941 with the initial Russian attacks and covers the period through the recapture of Stalingrad by the Russians in early 1943, or for all practical purposes, the real limits of Operation Barbarossa. The various facets of the total operation are divided into sections dealing with the advances on Moscow, Leningrad, and Rostov, the winter battles of 1941-42, the attempts at Russia's arctic ports, the Caucasus, and Stalingrad. The author thus completes his discussion at the point of the decisive reversal of the Russian campaign, the loss of the German 6th Army at Stalingrad.

Carell has produced a significant contribution to the literature dealing with the Russian campaign of World War II. The entire eastern campaign, which often seems to have been some infernal combination of luck and poor judgment, is stated in terms which give plausibility to the actions. Unlike many other discussions of this period, Carell gives sensible reasons for many of the actions which to this day seem unreasonable. For example, he defends Hitler's hold orders of late 1941 on the basis that the German troops were not trained for, nor oriented to the ideas of strategic withdrawal or elastic retreat, and that they might well have panicked in withdrawal with even more terrible losses. The results of the winter battles of 1941-42 tend to substantiate Hitler. Carell also argues convincingly in favor of Hitler's decision to attack the Ukraine instead of Moscow although this was against the advice of his field commanders, of Clausewitz, and of the fundamental rules of strategy. He points out again that the disasters of November 1942--January 1943 were primarily the results of the lack of manpower. "The war had grown too big for the Wehrmacht." Hitler's fear of a second front in Europe would not allow him to transfer the necessary units east, the units which might well have won. By late 1942, the famous last battalion was missing on every front.

The author is biased, but not annoyingly so. His sympathy for the troops in the field is understandable. The reader feels some empathy for the troops trapped

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in Stalingrad as Hitler's last order comes in: "I expect the northern pocket of Stalingrad to hold out to the finish. Every day, every hour, thus gained decisively benefits the remainder of the front." And even here, there is some reason in the order; soviet divisions, which might have been doing great damage elsewhere, were tied up around the pocket allowing the remaining German armies to reform. However, Carell does not attempt to defend the loss.

Although *Hitler Moves East* is less narrative than *Foxes of the Desert* and *Invasion,* Carell proves to be eminently readable. His translator, Ewald Osers, had done an excellent job. However, the frequent use of introductory rhetorical questions is as annoying as it is unnecessary. It is an unfortunate characteristic in an otherwise reasonable style. The easy familiarity with company commanders, platoon leaders, and section chiefs gives the work an aura of personal contact. A fine series of simple yet adequate situation maps accompany the description of each of the major battles. The index and bibliography are well-done and substantial. The translation of Carell's *Unternehmen Barbarossa* to *Hitler Moves East* is unfortunate. A simple translation to Operation Barbarossa would be much more appropriate and definitive. This is the operation which Carell describes.

William A. Stoppel

A VERY HUMAN CORNER

The Book of Paradise: *The Wonderful Adventures of Schmuel-Aba Abervo*. Itzik Manger. Hill and Wang, N.Y., 1965. 236 pp. $5.00.

In *The Book of Paradise,* Itzik Manger, among the leading Yiddish poets of our time, re-creates his childhood in an Eastern European village, and bestows eternal life upon it. He holds the mirror of village life on earth up to the mirror of Eden, and the images flow into one another. There are three Edens—the Turkish, the Christian, the Yiddish. And in the Yiddish Eden, the village folk of the poet's past live forever, side by side with the rabbis, the patriarchs, the prophets and the kings whose lives and teachings are the leaven of Jewish folklore.

The Book of Paradise was written in 1939 in Paris, as the first novel of a trilogy. This translation contains the whimsical drawings by Mendel Reif which appeared only in the first edition. The artist died in a concentration camp at the hands of the Nazis. Perhaps the dream of the trilogy suffered the same fate; the other two books, the poet says, may never be written. This first novel is written with exuberance, freshness and joy. Yet it remains a corner of the canvas the poet had once envisioned. There is no doubt, despite the translation, that the book was written by a poet — a poet who remembers, who is sensible of the meaning of his past. Of humans he says, "They think the world is such a bargain that it couldn't possibly pay to leave it." Yet it is a corner — a very human corner, filled with vitality — of this same world that he celebrates out of a profound love for it, and the desire that it will not perish.

A. Farrell Borenstein

FOR THE RECORD

The major item for comment is a first recording of Claudio Monteverdi's three-act opera, *Il Ritorno di Ulisse in Patria* (Ulysses' Return Home). Monteverdi was that anomaly among pre-Beethoven composers, a slow workman. During his long life he composed only seven full-length operas, and only three of them survived. There is still good hope that the opera that won him the most fame in his lifetime, *Arianna,* will turn up in some dusty vault to glitter once again on the stage and form the subject of some happy future record reviewer's lucubrations. In the meantime we have the great Claudio's first opera, *Orfeo* (1607), available on a severe but fine Deutsche Grammophon Archiv recording, and his last opera, *The Coronation of Poppaea* (1642), available in two versions, on Vox and Angel. And now, at last, the remaining opera is given to us in a handsome three-record Vox album (SDLBX 5211). This is not in Vox's cheap series, but part of a new deluxe series and it costs $15.00. Instead of paper and cardboard, the album is done in a handsome and sturdy green linen and contains an equally handsome libretto with a good English translation of the tricky and elaborately rhetorical Italian.

Ulysses' Return was Monteverdi's next-to-last stage work, written when he was an old man, and filled with a quiet splendor. The only manuscript was discovered late in the nineteenth century, rather unaccountably in the National Library in Vienna. There has been some controversy about its authenticity. The sort of scholar who could doubt it would also reject the authenticity of Beethoven's Tenth Symphony, supposing that Beethoven had written a Tenth Symphony and a copy of it had turned up in a manuscript in someone else's handwriting. What I am trying to say is that late Monteverdi is as inimitable as late Beethoven, and that no one who knows either master's late style could be imposed upon by forgeries. This opera is by Monteverdi, it is a masterpiece, and it is decidedly not for every taste. Coleridge talked about the "suspension of disbelief" necessary for the acquiring of "poetic faith." There is another and more difficult kind of suspension that goes into the appreciating of a long Monteverdi opera — call it the suspension of impatience, or of boredom, or of preconception. If you sit down to listen with the hope that you are going to hear Verdi or Puccini or Mozart or even Gluck, you will be disappointed. You have to submit yourself to a much slower pace, to a much more chaste concept of melody, to a vocal style which at first and second hearing sounds merely like dry declamation and only on repeated hearings begins to assume an extraordinary eloquence.

The main problem is that Monteverdi was writing just at the beginning of the era that was to find a way of combining instrumental and vocal music. The orchestra was just struggling into being and it already was laden with that chief hindrance to the imagination of the baroque musician: the *basso continuo.* As long tempt, and wishes Vox good luck. They've brought

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as composers felt that they had done their duty to the accompaniment by jotting down some notes in the bass, to be filled out with block harmony and piddling arpeggios, by the instrumentalists, the orchestra was a dead thing. And so it is, in fact, in Monteverdi's operas. Despite the modern editor's realizations of the *basso continuo* (and this recording is filled with all sorts of ancient instruments, including wheezing portative organs, regal, lute, chitarrone, gambas, and an incessant harp), it still remains unavoidably unrealized, embryonic. The orchestra, save for a few cursory and simple ritornello and "symphony" passages, has no thematic material, no heightening effect, no sensual beauty. It is merely there, ignominiously keeping the singers on pitch. But the singers! The eloquence of the human voice, backed with a thousand years of tradition, from plainchant to organum to polyphonic madrigal to homophonic madrigal and court and popular song. All this long tradition breathes in Monteverdi's vocal setting. The opera is unlike *Orfeo,* filled with duets and trios, of delicate vocal balancings, above all, of unique Monteverdian melody, suave and melting, heartbreakingly sad or impetuously headlong.

The story is the familiar one told in the last book of the Odyssey. Penelope has long been putting off the three suitors who desire both her and Ithaca. Ulysses has been away so many years, he must be dead. But he is not, and with the help of his patronness, Minerva, he bends the bow, slays the suitors, and is blissfully reunited with the long-suffering, patient Penelope. The music is cumulative, both in the individual scenes and as a whole. Eloquence and melodic beauty increase as the opera develops towards its climax. And the reunion of the happy pair is celebrated in an aria for Penelope and a final duet as beautiful as the great duet that ends *The Coronation of Poppaea.*

The performance, apparently a joint effort by German and English (American?) artists, is on the whole excellent. It is certainly not an easy opera to cast, since it requires five tenors in important parts (the tenor duets are among the chief glories of the work). It also requires two *basso profundo* singers for the parts of Neptune and Antinuous. In this recording both roles are sung by Eduard Wollitz, a basso who would do honor to Wagner's dragon or Mozart's high priest. The most beautiful voice in the cast, however, is that of Maureen Lehane, who sings Penelope. It is rare to find so gorgeous a voice put to the service of early music. One usually has to be contented with sopranos who couldn't make it in the minor opera houses and therefore have become "baroque specialists." The opera is not presented in full, although how extensive the cuts are I have no means of knowing, since the score (in Malipiero's collected edition) is not at present available to me.

Also from Vox, this time in the bargain-priced Vox Box series, is a first complete recording of Haydn's Op. 20 String Quartets (SVBX 555 — three records, $9.95). This is the first album in a projected complete recording of the Haydn quartets; one remembers that several other companies foundered in the same attogether four young musicians, the Dekany Quartet, especially for the series. Each album will contain at least one complete set of the mature quartets plus several of the immature quartets (that is, the nineteen works up to Op. 3). The present album, for instance, contains all six of Op. 20 and the first two of Op. 1. The one drawback in this generous procedure is that some of the quartets have to be broken up, the first half at the end of one side and the second half at the beginning of another. However, the kind of listener who piles the three records on his automatic turntable and lets them play indiscriminately won't know the difference; and my kind of listener, who selects one quartet at a time to give his full attention to, shouldn't mind juggling records — it helps to mark the pauses between movements. The Op. 20 group is every bit as fine as the more famous Op. 33 of almost ten years later. It contains some of Haydn's most exhilarating fugal writing, some fiery minor-mode allegros and is, in general, filled with a bold unorthodoxy. The Dekany Quartet is first-rate; one hopes that they don't disband after completing this monumental project. I recommend to them, and to Vox, the quartets of a great but neglected master who worshipped Haydn and whose music is a much more logical extension of Haydn's than is Beethoven's — Luigi Cherubini.

More early Haydn, two splendidly queer symphonies and two opera overtures, is offered in a new Vanguard release (VSD-71126) under the exacting baton of Antonio Janigro. Both No. 22 ("Der Philosoph") and No. 26 ("Lamentatione") begin with something very like chorale-preludes, pompous and richly clothed. No. 22 is scored, improbably enough, for two English horns. as well as two French horns and strings. (H. C. Robbins Landon, in his predictably excellent notes, says that Haydn was the only composer to use the *cor anglais* in a symphony before Cesar Franck. He's wrong; Mozart uses it in one of his very first symphonies.) The two overtures are "L'Isola Disabitata" (a fine, fiery G minor piece long familiar to record listeners) and "Orlando Paladino," a bit of claptrap but not unamusing.

Finally, William Boyce's celebrated set of *Eight Symphonies,* again performed on Vanguard by Janigro, this time with his small and virtuosic Solisti di Zagreb (BGS-70668). Boyce was writing in the Baroque manner in 1760, when most of his contemporaries had capitulated to the easier charms of Christian Bach and the Mannheimers. Reactionary or not, he produced a set of miniature symphonies (or rather concerti grossi without soloists) that the English have reason to be proud of. And these pieces are English, too, despite the obvious derivation of the form from Corelli by way of Handel. They are filled with jigs and hornpipes and airs that, save for their superior workmanship, might have come straight out of the *Beggars' Opera.* London has long had an edition of Boyce's symphonies on two records. Vanguard, by omitting most repeats, gets them all on one, and in a performance that far outdistances the rival set.

David Johnson

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